

# The SIGN



NATIONAL CATHOLIC MAGAZINE



BACK TO WAR - - - - - Kenneth Campbell

THE DAY AFTER YESTERDAY - Helen Walker Homan

SPIRITUAL REALITIES - - - - - W. J. Blyton

A REVOLUTION BACKWARDS - - - John F. Cronin

NEUTRALITY IN MODERN WAR - - Walter J. Marx

MATERNITY GUILDS - - - - - Edgar Schmiedeler

THIS WORD "DEMOCRACY" - William Thomas Walsh

OCTOBER, 1939

PRICE 20c

# WHAT IS LEFT FOR HER?

Death would be easier to bear than the grief which rends this mother's heart. This simple picture tells the story better than a thousand words. The bombers have done their work.

Down this street of desolation the missionary walks. His words of hope must stem the tide of despair that rises in the hearts of war's defenseless victims. But the Catholic priest and Sister in China today must try to do more than preach. They must bind the wounds of their audience, give food to their starving bodies.

Do not just glance at this photograph. Let it come home to you. It will plead the cause of our missionaries in China. Please send an offering to:

## THE SIGN

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# The SIGN



Vol. 19 • No. 3

October • 1939

THE SIGN, a monthly publication, is owned, edited and published at Union City, N. J., by the Passionist Fathers. (Legal Title—Passionist Missions, Inc.) Subscription price \$2.00 per year, in advance; single copies, 20c. Canada, \$2.00 per year; Foreign, \$2.50 per year.

All checks and money orders should be made payable to THE SIGN. All cash remittances should be registered.

Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor. They should be typewritten, and accompanied by return postage. All accepted manuscripts are paid for on acceptance without reference to time of publication.

Subscriptions, Advertising and Business Matters should be addressed to the Business Manager. Advertising rates on application. Requests for Renewals, Discontinuance, change of address should be sent in at least two weeks before they are to go into effect. Both the old and the new address should always be given. Phone—Union 7-6893.

Entered as Second-Class Matter, September 20, 1921, at the Post Office at Union City, N. J., under the act of March 3, 1879. Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Par. 4—Sec. 538, Act of May 28, 1925.

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1939

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# EDITORIAL

## THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS FRONT



ECHOES of surprise, dismay and "I told you so" are still ringing throughout the nations over the conclusion of the Nazi-Communist Pact. The whole import of the agreement is not yet grasped. Something of the threat it holds is dawning on an astonished world. Many of our columnists, feature writers and authors must wish that the records of their past sentiments had been destroyed. Their about-face, their sudden discovery of twin ideologies inspiring two inimical regimes would be highly amusing were it not a proof of insincerity. For much had been written, in the Catholic Press and elsewhere, of the common ground on which the two totalitarian governments stood. The information was available for those who cared to read it.

We cannot help expressing a thought which has been given little consideration. Go back to the editorial columns of the secular dailies during the months when England and France were negotiating with Soviet Russia. There was no general outcry then against a similar pact. Nor are England and France to be spotlighted alone and damned for their efforts. Other great democracies were just as eager to be friendly with the Reds. It was only when they were double-crossed that the veil fell from their eyes. Then they saw, for the first time (so we are to believe) that the present government of Russia is not democratic, but blood-brother of Nazism and indeed just as untrustworthy and vile!

THIS practice of referring to back files in the newspapers is most instructive. It gives a clue to methods of handling the news and of shaping public opinion. As an illustration: now that war is on in Europe we shall hear of—indeed, we have already heard of practices which the press condemned so strongly during the Spanish war. Cries against the violation of neutrality and against blockade then rent the air. Now that British supply ships have been sunk and the British navy, in turn, is attempting to blockade Germany, the technique is taken for granted by our papers. Once again, the utter insincerity. We know that, were we at war, we would try to cut the enemy off from supplies and that every effort would be made to make us suffer in the same way. Yet German or British civilians can get just as hungry as the Spanish. Ask those who went through the World War. Why do

we not hear as vigorous protests against the present blockades?

The Nazi-Soviet Pact brings together two regimes which have been persecuting the Church. There is no denying that. Such a combination has frightful possibilities which make one shudder. It is not pleasant to contemplate what may happen if Germany and Russia agree to press further their war on religion. And it may be that Christians and Jews alike will be called on to face a common foe. It may also be that the slogan will resound throughout Europe and the world: "Fight the persecutors. Save religion." We wonder why the nations did not shout it when the Loyalists were holding their bloody massacres? Or before that, when Mexico was drenched with the blood of Catholics?

But, here again, let us have honesty. Certainly we wish to present a united front against those who would blot out the worship and the very name of God from His own universe. Is that united front to be used as an excuse for raising money, for sacrificing men, for promoting only further international hatreds? Let us not be deceived.

IF THERE is sincerity behind the alarm which all religious people must feel, they should prove it not only by opposing evil men but by turning to the good God. When nations again crucify Christ we Christians will do little good by shouting at them from afar. Our best defense and our surest hope of victory is to move nearer to Him. These are not the tactics with which statesmen and generals have shown familiarity. Christians of the world, however, should insist that—allowing patriotism all its claims—religion must come first.

Catholics will turn instinctively, especially during the month of the rosary, to Mary who is the Queen of Peace. It was on Calvary that Christ made her mother of all men, in the person of St. John. Our Lord awaited her before He came into the world as its Redeemer. In these days of darkness and despair her intercession with her Divine Son may obtain for us the lasting peace for which we so sincerely pray.

*Father Theophane Maguire O.P.*





**AGAIN?**



# Personal MENTION

• **KENNETH CAMPBELL**, who contributes *Back to War*, is a New York newspaperman of wide experience and profound knowledge of European affairs. At present he holds an important position on a Metropolitan daily. Mr. Campbell worked in Paris some time ago for the *New York Evening Post*, while that paper was under Curtis-Martin ownership.

• **PRESERVING** American neutrality is going to give our government plenty of headaches in the coming months. Guarding our rights as neutrals—especially on the high seas—will cause untold complications and worries. Much light is thrown on the matter by **WALTER J. MARX** in his article, *Neutrality in Modern War*.

Mr. Marx was born in Nome, Alaska, and at the age of fourteen was editing and publishing his own little paper. From the O'Dea (Christian Brothers) High School at Seattle he went to the University of Washington. As a C.R.B. Fellow for historical research he attended the universities of Louvain and Brussels, 1932-1934. He was instructor for a time in Social Sciences at Yonkers Collegiate Center, and was assistant professor of history at Mt. St. Joseph's College, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. He is now teaching at the Catholic University.

• **ROBERT G. PALMER** is the pen name of James McPartlin. To this issue of *THE SIGN* he contributes the tale of an Irishman who accompanied Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to the New World.



Robert G. Palmer

The author was born in 1911, at Joliet, Illinois. He received his primary education from the Carmelite Fathers in Chicago, and later attended De Paul University, where he combined with the study of law a deep interest in medieval history and Irish legend.

• **JUST** as we were going to press we received an article by air mail from England. It appears under the title *The*

*Day After Yesterday*. **HELEN WALKER HOMAN**, the author, was in England doing some writing when war broke out and her impressions, recorded in her article, are written with her usual charm and verve.

Mrs. Homan has contributed frequently to *THE SIGN*. Her *Letters to the Apostles* first appeared in the pages of this magazine.

She was educated at Notre Dame of Maryland and at Lausanne, Switzerland. After passing the New York State bar examination she decided to devote herself to a literary career.



Helen Walker Homan

• **REV. JOHN F. CRONIN, S.S.**, author of *Distributism: A Revolution Backwards*, is already well known to readers of *THE SIGN*. We wish to call attention to the fact that to following issues of the magazine he will contribute several important articles on the Social Problem. The first of these articles will be *Consumer Co-operatives: Utopia or Delusion?* and the second will be *The Economics of the Spirit*.

• **MANY** inquiries have come to us concerning the drawings which accompany the articles on the Passion of Christ by Father Damian Reid, C.P. A short biographical sketch of the artist, **MARIO BARBERIS**, was given on this page in the issue of April, 1939. In the field of sacred art, the work of Mr. Barberis is unexcelled. He is well known throughout Europe. The drawings he is doing for *THE SIGN* are the first of his work to appear in this country. The original drawings are done on wood.

• **MARY FABYAN WINDEATT** returns to our pages with a poem, *Bread Line*. Miss Windeatt was born in 1910, in Regina, Saskatchewan. She came to the United States in 1927 and was graduated in 1934 from the California State College. After graduation she came to New York, where she has resided since that time. She has written two novels, two juvenile books and a play, in addition to many short stories, poems and articles.



# Current FACT AND COMMENT

THE NEARER we are to events the more difficult it is to regard them in their true historical perspective. This difficulty is increased by the outbreak of war. At such

## Europe and War

a time passions are inflamed, sympathy is aroused for one side and hatred for the other, and to make matters worse, the channels through which we receive information are poisoned by propaganda. And yet unless we Americans get a true perspective of the conflict that is taking place in Europe we are liable to form views, and as a result to make decisions, which later we shall have grave reasons to regret.

It is well for us Americans to remember that war is almost endemic to modern Europe. Look back over the history of the last few hundred years and you will find that scarcely a decade has passed in which war has not on several occasions reddened with blood the soil of Europe. European nations have been accustomed for so long to settle their quarrels by bloodshed that it is almost Utopian to hope that they will ever resort to any other means. Even the short periods of peace that intervene between conflicts are used as a preparation for war.

It is well for us Americans, at the very beginning, to divest our judgments on European war of that aura of idealism with which we surrounded our own participation in the World War as a struggle to make the world safe for democracy. European nations go to war to protect or to gain certain definite material advantages such as increased territory, economic superiority, commercial opportunities, maintenance of the balance of power, etc. These reasons, of course, are never the ones assigned, especially in these days of official propaganda agencies. If we can believe the reasons assigned, war is never fought for anything less worthy than the triumph of justice and right. As a matter of fact, principles of truth or honor or decency or honesty have never been allowed to weigh for a moment in the balance against the greedy and selfish hope for gain. If we needed any further proof we have it in the pact recently concluded between Stalin, the protagonist of the fight on Nazism, and Hitler, the Sir Galahad of the war on Communism.

Another thing which we Americans should keep in mind—and which is well illustrated by the Russo-German Pact—is that the present alliances in Europe are only temporary. They are not founded on any principles of right and wrong. European history has known a variety of groupings of nations dictated by the advantages of the moment. Where there is no real

love or common interest the friends of today may be the enemies of tomorrow.

Such a view of Europe and its conflicts may seem unduly cynical, but it is the only one justified by the facts in the case. It is a view which should make us Americans realize how stupid it would be for us to leave the security and comparative prosperity of this continent to embroil ourselves in Europe's affairs.

THE TRADITIONAL foreign policy of the United States is one of isolation. It was George Washington himself who formulated that policy and held this country to

## Americans and "Internationalism"

it in its dangerous formative period. The Presidents who succeeded Washington wisely followed in his footsteps in evading foreign alliances and commitments. Jefferson, the Adamses, Madison, Jackson and Lincoln were what today would be called "isolationists." It was only at the end of the nineteenth century that there began to manifest itself a counter-current of feeling that since America had come of age it should take its share of world problems and interest itself in affairs beyond its own frontiers.

Today that counter-current threatens to become the main current. Writing in the September *Harper's*, Charles A. Beard says very well: "Frenetic preoccupation with foreign quarrels has now reached the proportion of a heavy industry in this country. All our universities have funds and endowments for teaching what is called international relations, and since about 1918 a large part of this instruction has been stripped of all scientific pretensions and has been little more than propaganda for the League of Nations, collective security, collaboration with Great Britain and France, or some kind of regularized intervention by the United States Government in controversies everywhere, except perhaps at Amritsar or in Syria. Hundreds of professors, instructors and assistants, sustained by endowments, lecture to students, forums, women's clubs, academies and dinner parties on their favorite theme—the duty of the United States to set the world aright. . . . And brash young tom-tom beaters in journalism, who know no history beyond a few days ago, write books on the inside of this or that, all directed profitably to the same end."

The result of all this is that the American public is being assaulted by a constant barrage of propaganda to the effect that it is impossible for a nation to isolate itself in modern war. Whether we like it or not, scientific inventions have brought Europe to our doorstep. Whether we realize it or not, our frontier—



equally with those of Britain and France—is on the Rhine. We may hide our heads in the sand for a time but we shall awaken finally to a realization of the fact that it is impossible for us to keep out of a European conflict.

All of which is stuff and nonsense. In spite of modern scientific inventions Europe is still 3000 miles away, and that is still far enough to make us safe from any power or combination of powers. We do not wish to isolate ourselves from Europe. All we ask is that we "insulate" ourselves from Europe's wars.

It is still true and probably will be for many years to come that we shall not have war unless we go abroad in search of it.

THE PRESENT WAR in Europe is no exception to the general rule. It is not a war of principles. It is not a battle of ideologies. It is a war that has been precipitated by the Nazis in their

### Interests at Stake European

effort to dominate Eastern Europe. Permitted by Britain to rebuild its military strength as a balance to French domination of the Continent, Germany has gotten out of hand, and now Britain and France have found it necessary to go to the aid of Poland in a desperate effort to maintain the status quo—which means in plain terms their own interests.

The German thesis that the war has been caused by the Versailles Treaty and is being waged to remove its last vestiges has no validity whatever. Some of the terms of that Treaty were undoubtedly harsh, but it must be remembered that many of them were never really enforced. Furthermore, Germany had already fought her way back from defeat and had already nullified all the restrictive and punitive clauses of that Treaty.

German wailing about the Versailles Treaty would arouse more sympathy if the world did not still remember the treaty imposed by the Germans on the defeated Russians at Brest-Litovsk less than a year before the end of the World War. Beside it the Treaty of Versailles was a model of leniency and generosity.

At any rate the interests at stake and the ends for which the war is being conducted are purely European and have nothing whatever to do with us Americans.

SAD TO SAY the present administration in Washington has shown serious leanings toward the side of those who advocate intervention in European affairs. On

### The Administration and Neutrality

several occasions President Roosevelt has made it plain that he favors aligning the United States with the "democracies" against the "dictatorships." He has made every effort to give American support to Great Britain and France and has on several occasions "lectured" the dictators. In this he is following in the footsteps of his great Democratic predecessor, Woodrow Wilson, who at one time pictured himself in the Messianic role of savior of Europe.

Let it be said to the President's credit, however, that since the outbreak of hostilities in Europe he has been meticulously careful in the fulfillment of his duties in applying American neutrality laws. In his

radio speech to the nation on September 3rd, the President declared: "This nation will remain a neutral nation. I hope that the United States will stay out of this war and I believe that it can." In view of the President's well-known ability to express himself forcefully where he feels strongly, that is not a very ringing or determined declaration, but we may take it for what it is worth and "hope" and "believe" with the President.

Before these lines appear in print Congress will have convened in special session to consider the President's proposals to change the Neutrality Act. We believe that if Congress consents to the President's request it will be taking the first step on the road that will lead America into war. We hope therefore that Congress will continue the embargo on shipping arms and munitions to belligerents.

Furthermore, since the President himself has declared the existence of a national emergency, we think it the duty of Congress to remain in session to bear its part in the responsibilities of government in this time of stress and danger. Our sympathies and our national policy are two distinct things, and our present Administration has shown too strong a tendency to identify them. In view of this fact, Congress should keep as much responsibility as possible in its own hands and watch carefully over any grants of power that might enable the Administration to embroil us in a war.

WHATEVER other effect the Nazi-Communist pact had, it provided the world with a few laughs at the expense of the various pinks and reds who had been extolling the Soviet Union as a great promoter of peace and a firm barrier against Nazi aggression. We have seldom seen anything so ridiculous

### Hitler's Opinion of Russia

as the intellectual squirmings and verbal maneuverings of American leftists in their efforts to explain away the Communist fall from grace. We are even asked to believe that the Nazi-Communist pact is a master stroke on the part of Stalin in furthering the cause of peace.

And we wonder if Mr. Hitler will now make some changes in his book, *Mein Kampf*. In view of the present Russo-German friendship he must feel embarrassed to think that his Russian friends can find there some extremely unflattering remarks.

Here is what Hitler thought of Russia and its rulers at the time he wrote *Mein Kampf*, the Nazi bible: "Those who are in power in Russia today have no idea of forming an honorable alliance or of remaining true to it if they did."

"It must never be forgotten that the present rulers of Russia are blood-stained criminals, that here we have the dregs of humanity which, favored by the circumstances of a tragic moment, overran a great State, degraded and extirpated millions of educated people out of sheer blood-lust, and that now for nearly ten years they have ruled with such a savage tyranny as was never known before. It must not be forgotten that these rulers belong to a people in whom the most bestial cruelty is allied with a capacity for artful mendacity and believes itself today more than ever called to impose its sanguinary despotism on the rest of the world."



Etching by Kerr Eby. Courtesy of Frederick Keppel Galleries, N. Y.

*The flower of Europe's manhood marches off again to a war provoked by the madman who leads the German people*

# Back To War

By KENNETH CAMPBELL

WHEN Germany lay prostrate in defeat after the first World War, the victors gathered at Versailles to re-make the map of Europe. It is the fashion now to say that they did a miserable and stupid job. That disastrous mistakes were made is now obvious. Yet certain elements entered into the Versailles Conference that kept it from being as stupid as it might have been. Chief among these elements was the rivalry of the victors. Germany was able to profit by this to a considerable extent.

In the light of the outbreak of what may well be the Second World War, the most important result of Versailles was that while Germany

was placed in an impractical economic servitude, she was not deprived of the means of internal political action. It was as if Germany had been a convict placed in a cell to starve but allowed to keep a loaded pistol by which he might shoot his way out.

In spite of what the Germans now say, the period between the two conflicts was not entirely devoid of peaceful efforts made by men of good will in many nations. Aristide Briand made sincere efforts for peace, as did Gustave Stresemann. The League of Nations for a time offered a fair forum, and hope for peace burned high at Locarno. Unfortunately there was more heat than

light in most of the negotiations for necessary adjustments.

In the many episodes of misunderstanding, willful and sincere, that took place in the post-war scene, one comes to mind as typical. After Germany had gone through the agonizing wringer of currency collapse, she staggered to her feet and managed, after long effort, to negotiate a customs union with Austria. Far from alleviating Germany's condition, this move resulted in further shaken confidence in financial circles. The collapse of the *Kreditanstalt* in 1930 heralded the arrival of a tremendous financial collapse in Central Europe.

In the summer of that year Chancellor Brüning of Germany went to

Paris to beg for aid. Pierre Laval was the French Premier and although the pacific Briand was still Minister of Foreign Affairs, he was old and ill and Laval had taken over most of his work. Brüning's pleas were flatly and even rudely rejected, although Laval rather grudgingly promised to make a return good will visit to Berlin. He and Briand went to the German capital in August. As they stood on the balcony of the Hotel Adlon, the crowd below cried: "Retten Sie uns"—save us. Laval did nothing that could be effective, with the result that the Brüning government was stripped of prestige at home. The forces that led to Adolf Hitler were given tremendous impetus by the failure of Brüning's plea.

From the day that the Brüning government fell to the present time, no opportunity for the exercise of reason or even for the manifestation of reasonable long-range self interest has been possible between the victors of Versailles and the leaders of a resuscitated and dynamic Reich.

With the advent of Hitler, Germany, thrown into the cell to starve, began to brandish the pistol that she had been permitted to keep: the pistol of internal political freedom carrying with it the ability to menace the world by an internal revolution that might in time be exported beyond the country's borders to the undoing of the Versailles victors.

The ideological nature of this revolution—whether, indeed, it is a real revolution or merely a mass adventure in nihilism masquerading as a revolution—does not come within the scope of this article. It is sufficient to say that by fair means or foul, it united 65,000,000 people into a compact mass dominated by one man and capable of being hurled against the bars of the economic prison in which Germany had been confined at Versailles.

**I**F THE victors of Versailles had made mistakes, so did Hitler and his associates. If selfishness, intrigue, shortsightedness and hypocrisy had been present in varying proportions around the council tables of Versailles, cynicism, gross materialism and an obtuse lack of understanding of world feeling dominated the councils of the Nazis. Accordingly, as Germany had been saved from complete dismemberment at Versailles

by the inability of the Allies to sink their jealousies for the benefit of their long-range interests, so were the Allies strengthened by the inability of the Nazis to present their cause without making the gestures of violence that filled the rest of the civilized world with loathing and fear.

The disarmament requirements placed upon Germany by the Allies, not the least reasonable demands incorporated in the Versailles Treaty, were evaded by the Weimar Republic and openly flouted by the Nazis. Almost alone among the statesmen of France and England, Winston Churchill raised his voice in an effort to obtain support for a program that would curb the expanding military power of Germany before it got out of control.

On March 7, 1936, Hitler re-occupied the demilitarized Rhineland zone. Many people believed that France would march immediately to eject the Germans. Hitler had chosen his moment well, however. France cast an inquiring glance at England and recognized the fatal truth. England was not going to move because Germans had marched into part—of Germany.

Thus France and England lost the golden moment that never came again. Today, in the Saar, French infantry is scrambling through the barbed wire under a hail of bullets to capture a region that was once part of the demilitarized zone and from which they could have barred the Germans if they had wished to deny the Germans the Saar plebiscite that had been promised them.

The occupation of Austria in 1937 and the taking over of Czechoslovakia in 1938 made Hitler's political position almost impregnable in Germany. These moves also had another effect. They penetrated the comfortable apathy of the English, and they served to unite a disunited France. The German policy of expanding its territory only for the purpose of taking in German minorities beyond its borders was shelved when Germany took over the non-German Czechs. It was replaced by a new policy of *lebensraum*, or living room for Germany.

It might be well at this time to consider the atmosphere in which negotiations between Hitler and the leaders of opposing countries have been conducted. This atmosphere

has great bearing on the outbreak of the present war. Its extent has never fully been understood.

When French and British diplomats are conducting negotiations with their opponents, they may be deceitful, double-dealing and hypocritical, but they almost invariably maintain the outward amenities. Even if they swindle their opponents, they usually contrive not to insult them personally.

**S**INCE Hitler consolidated his power, his interviews with negotiators for other countries have been characterized by hysterical outbursts in which good manners are thrown to the wind. When Lord Halifax had an interview with Hitler at a period well before the situation became hopeless and when personal good will might have done much, the British diplomat was exposed to an hour of shouting from Hitler—shouting conducted as if Hitler were addressing 100,000 of his Storm Troopers in Tempelhof Field instead of one man visiting him in his office. Dr. Kurt Schuschnigg was submitted to a merciless personal browbeating and although no exact account has ever been published of the interviews attendant up the Munich incident last year, there are many reasons to believe that Chamberlain and Daladier were insulted not only as representatives of their countries, but as gentlemen as well.

As we have noted of the negotiators at Versailles, statesmen are but mortal men. It is not always possible for them to sink their personal feelings in the welfare of the world and of their country. The result is that they frequently react to personal insults in international affairs much as they would react to those same insults from a man with whom they were having personal or business dealings that affected only their private lives.

If now on the field of battle, Hitler is faced by implacable enemies, he may in part blame the situation on the lack of restraint and good manners that he and his subordinates showed in their personal contacts with the leaders of the nations which now oppose them.

One phase of Hitler's diplomacy before the outbreak of the present war is of such import that it must be discussed out of the sequence of



events. This is the conclusion of the non-aggression pact with Soviet Russia. In it the world is confronted by the possible merging of the two greatest revolutionary movements of the twentieth century.

Although this union caught the world in general by surprise, there were several portents of it. In edging Germany within the orbit of revolutionary Russia, Hitler was doing no more than following the policy of Bismarck who sought by every means to edge autocratic Germany into the orbit of autocratic Russia. The traditional surge of Czarist Russia toward the ice-free port of Constantinople, together with Russia's desires for spheres of influence in the Balkans and the Near East brought German and Russian aspirations into conflict at many points, but Bismarck never let these conflicts result in an open breach.

As the westward pressure of the Slav in Europe encountered the eastward trend of pioneering Teutons along the Vistula, Bismarck's policy began to falter in the less skillful hands of Prince Bülow, Bethmann-Hollweg and others. The shrewd, if cynical and chauvinistic diplomacy of Poincaré succeeded in establishing the breach between the two countries before the World War.

After the collapse of Russia and the rise to power of the Bolshevik government in 1917, Germany and Soviet Russia met at Brest-Litovsk to arrange peace. This peace, it was agreed, was to be one of "no annexations, no indemnities and the principles of self-determination." But when the treaty was signed on March 3, 1918, Russia had lost 34 per cent of her population, 32 per cent of her agricultural land, 54 per cent of her industrial enterprises and 89 per cent of her coal mines.

Hitler rose to power on two simply expressed platform planks: the annulment of the Treaty of Versailles and the rescuing of the Reich from the Communism that at one time had threatened to engulf her. His plan was offered as the direct antithesis of Bolshevism, and so for a time it seemed to be.

But by 1935 indications began to be apparent that the two great world revolutionary movements were beginning to converge. Trade relations between the two countries were carried on with bland disregard of the fulminations of the leaders and the

press of the two countries. The situation that Clemenceau had so dreaded at Versailles, the exchange of German technical skill for Soviet raw material, was being carried on at a great pace.

In Russia, circumstances, or perhaps personal inclinations, resulted in the shelving by Stalin of the world revolution phases of Communism. In Germany, other circumstances forced Hitler to adopt many of the methods of the Communists, although he still continued to belabor them shrilly. Eventually, both of these countries began to feel the need of each other since their policies had almost isolated them from the democratic western world.

IN A SERIES of articles recently in the *Saturday Evening Post*, W. G. Krivitsky, a former Soviet military intelligence officer, disclosed that Stalin was a great personal admirer of Hitler and that he was using every means to bring Germany and the Soviets together.

Regardless of the degree of sincerity possessed by the parties that entered into the recent Soviet-German non-aggression pact, the union presents what is definitely the main problem of the present war. With Soviet Russia arrayed on the side of the Allies, or even maintaining a strict impartial neutrality, the military and economic pressure that the French and English could exert on Germany was almost certain to bring ultimate victory to the Allies, although perhaps not without a bitter struggle. With Russia exercising a most benevolent attitude toward Germany, the democratic nations of the west are threatened with a life-and-death struggle.

One factor may bring hope to France and England, however. It must be remembered that during the World War, Germany over-ran or controlled the Ukraine and other areas from which she vainly attempted to obtain the foodstuffs that she needed if she was to survive the inexorable British blockade. Yet although she controlled these areas from which, in theory, she could derive sustenance, she possessed neither the man power nor the transport to bring this food to her starving people.

The Reich is again at war. Her man power and transport are again taxed to the limit. Authentic re-

ports indicated that even before this war, ten per cent of the German rolling stock was in need of immediate replacement and the rest was approaching the limit of its endurance. Nor is the Soviet transport much better. In a book published several weeks ago and entitled *Stalin: A Critical Study*, Boris Souvarine, an authority on conditions within the Soviets, said: "Neither industry nor agriculture, and still less transport, is ready in the USSR to endure the tension of a modern war."

Although the regions from which Germany failed to obtain the food that might have saved her from complete defeat in the last war were disorganized by civil strife at that time and are now peacefully under the control of the Soviet government, there is considerable doubt whether both governments could exploit them to the full during a war.

Given five years of peace, Hitler might have perfected his arrangements with Russia and then fallen on Poland and France like a thunderbolt, his home front secured by ample food supplies and his mechanized armies plentifully supplied with oil and gasoline.

But his own methods forced his hand. Being a dictator, he could not risk even a minor check. The precious five years that he might need were not to be had. He must do in the confusion of war what he might have done in the leisure of peace.

In addition, there is always the chance that Stalin may betray Hitler as he betrayed the military mission behind whose back he negotiated with Germany. The irredentist problem of Russia may not wait the convenience of Germany. Brest-Litovsk calls for revenge.

The military aspects of the present struggle are problems that can be solved only by trial and error. Whether defense in land warfare will prove superior to the offense, whether the morale of civilians and combatants can withstand the terrific strain of modern war, whether the submarine can be as effective in this war as it was in the last, are all questions that must await the dreadful test of battle and blockade.

As for the final outcome, one may say that the opinion of the world, so rudely flouted by the Nazis as it was by the Hohenzollerns, may again organize to defeat Germany.



# The Day After Yesterday

By HELEN WALKER HOMAN

ENGLAND, September 4th—the day after yesterday. A senseless way of putting it; but somehow I can't think of this day in any other way. For in a queer way, it is not today. I've tried, but it will not become today. It just keeps on being the day after yesterday. The strangest yesterday of any that I've ever lived.

Yesterday, England declared war at 11:15 A.M. And at 11:30, only fifteen minutes later, the air-raid sirens shrieked out their first message of terror in what may perhaps become the most ghastly conflict history has ever known.

As we in this quiet country house which faces the sea (London lying only an hour away) prepared for sleep on the night preceding yesterday, the very elements seemed to enfold us in a foreshadowing of doom. During the last few days of tension through which we had just passed, the English Channel, which almost sweeps the foot of our garden, had gradually risen from a placid surface to a pitching, troubled restlessness suggesting the turbulence lying beyond—such a little way beyond—where the Channel's other shore is Europe.

On the eve of yesterday, a dim sun set in a mist of fog—the wind rose and whipped the Channel into a rapid, crashing sea—storm-clouds lowered and loosed their heavy bur-

den upon us. Even the gently rolling Sussex Downs at our back, whose lovely peace is so inherent that storms are usually powerless to destroy it, even they seemed to shrink and quail under the impact of that thunder and lightning which I shall always remember as fraught with a sinister threat peculiarly their own—a particular warning of inevitable tragedy.

Dinner and coffee had long been finished. It was the time of good-nights. Leaving a doubly shrouded room over whose windows thick black paper had been carefully attached from the inside (the government's regulations for air-raid protection, fulfilled by all, even though war had not yet been declared) and over which, in turn, heavy curtains had been drawn, we mounted the stairway in pitch darkness. For the stairway opens upon a landing where a broad casement looks out over the downs; and these windows had not yet been "black-out." The rain beat furiously against them, and through them now came flashes of lightning, fiercely illuminating that usually peaceful landscape.

"On such a night as this," someone began.

"Macbeth's witches gathered on the desolate heath," another finished.

And later, when I had carefully extinguished the small bedside lamp and drawn back the thick curtains, opening my own black-papered windows upon that same scene, my last thoughts also turned to Macbeth. "When the battle's lost and won"—the battle for peace or war going on

between Chamberlain and Hitler.

That was the eve before yesterday. With the advent of a breakfast tray came the realization that the storm had lashed itself out and that a weak sun was fighting for a place between cold gray clouds. It was Sunday.

I would not be an "early Christian," I thought, remembering the hours spent on my feet the day before at the local clinic, serving tea and handing out two days' food rations to the expectant mothers, evacuated early that morning from the slums of London. The utter fatigue upon their faces (most of them had one or two little children clinging to their skirts; some carried infants not yet two years old in their arms; and all were soon to bear yet another child), that patient fatigue, that unquestioning hopelessness, was still haunting me. They had left their homes in London, their husbands and older sons who waited the summons all expected, and they were to be billeted, on sufferance, with neighboring families in homes which they had never before seen, the homes of strangers.

It would have to be the eleven o'clock Mass, I thought, glancing at the clock. The morning paper held out a thin thread of hope, to be eagerly seized between sips of tea. Chamberlain had given Hitler one more chance. If he would say, by 11:00 o'clock that morning, that he would withdraw Germany's armed forces from Poland—forces which had already wrought death and destruction—and would submit his claims to arbitration, there might still be peace, that peace of which the green Sussex downs were now speaking to

me through the open window. . . .

The lovely little Church of the Sacred Heart, in Hove, had opened its doors to a throng of worshippers, but I was yet early enough to find a seat midway up one of the side aisles. The pews in front of me were filled. Up beyond, in the very front pew and to my right, I happened to notice an unusually erect feminine back—not the back of a young woman, but taller and straighter than its five companions. It somehow bespoke, although only a back, character and personality. And just then, Canon Crea came out and knelt before the altar. The Mass had begun.

After the Gospel, he moved to one side and sat down, while a younger priest mounted the pulpit.

"The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians," he read. "Brethren . . . walk in the spirit . . . for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary, one to another, so that you do not the things that you would. . . . Now the works of the flesh are . . . enmities, contentions, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, envies, murders . . . they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is charity, joy, peace. . . ."

And then, with the stirring and rising of the congregation, followed the Gospel from Saint Matthew:

"At that time, Jesus said to His disciples: No man can serve two masters. . . . You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on. . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow . . ."

(There were lilies upon the altar, I noticed. Their beauty and the beauty of the Gospel somehow met and mingled.)

"They labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these . . ."

(Rich, waxy white; lustrous green—)

The voice went on: "O, ye of little faith! . . . Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice—"

And then, suddenly into all that quiet beauty burst the frantic noise of the damned. The scream of sirens splitting our ear-drums, smiting us down. Without cessation, a breathless, continuous shrieking and moan-

ing—sheer, blank terror. And although I had never heard that sound before in all my life, I knew it for what it was, in the terror it poured forth. It was the air-raid signal. "Take cover! Take cover!" it screamed.

The young priest hesitated in the pulpit. There was a rush and stir behind me; people moving, standing, dropping to their knees. A few left their pews and walked rapidly down the aisles toward the doors. And I found myself, quite unexpectedly, walking directly toward the altar. If I were to die, what better place than at the feet of God?

The sirens continued their diabolical clamor. It was as though a thousand fiends had been loosed. The young priest left the pulpit. And at that moment, when the pitch of terror was at its height, Canon Crea quietly arose from his seat at the side, and with measured, slow step, once more approached the altar. He was continuing the Mass. Something in his serenity, in the steadiness of his outstretched arms, spread a calm that reached from person to person, from row to row, down to the very end of that church. The congregation was quieted and dropped to its knees.

And now, at last, the agony of sound ceased. And the Mass went steadily, quietly on. One knew that in that deathlike silence, every heart was breathing the same prayer.

Would the "All-Clear" signal never come? A little girl behind me was weeping quietly. Then, the Consecration. . . . It didn't much matter now, about that All-Clear signal. He who calms all terrors was at our side. The candles flickered peacefully, casting a glow upon the lilies.

The Mass was ended. People sat, or stood, undetermined what to do. Should they risk the open street? The safety signal had not yet been sounded. At that moment, we did not even know that war had been declared. We only knew that an air-raid was in progress. Just then, another priest came to the altar-rail and announced that everyone was "to get home as quickly as possible." I turned for the first time to the



European Photo

woman next to whom I'd been kneeling—and found that it was she whose erect back I'd noticed just before the service began.

"Which way do you go?" she asked.

It happened to be a way that lay in her own neighborhood.

"You must come with us. But we must hurry."

A car, driven by an apprehensive chauffeur, carried us rapidly through deserted streets over which hung a breathless suspense.

Finally, the house was achieved. The door closed, shutting out that vibrant stillness. And then someone was saying that the radio had announced what all had expected and feared—war. And now at last came the All-Clear signal—a prolonged note of the sirens.

And now, on the morning of this day after yesterday, on this September fourth, the news of the sinking of the Athenia has reached us. It was torpedoed last night. . . . Squadrons of British war planes are humming over the smiling garden. Lorries full of uniformed troops are roaring down the road. The radio—I forget, it is called "the wireless" here—is blaring forth news of the fighting in Poland, the mobilization of the French army. England is at war.

Strange, how peaceful the downs look, from my window.



A CATHOLIC Archbishop told us in his diocese a short time ago: "Pray—enough of you, and earnestly enough—and there will be no war."

Startling, to the worldly. Yet convincing as soon as looked into. In these all-important decisions, a sincere minority in each country suffices to influence the men who speak or act.

Even though war has broken out, that prayer is not necessarily unanswered. For there is such a thing as a short, abortive war—lost by the aggressor from the beginning. And *this* might serve the cause of peace and right, in the long run, better than a mere armed truce. God answers prayer, but in His way. More things are wrought by it, says our poet, than this world dreams of, and without it men, like the beasts, "nourish a blind life within the brain." Jacques Maritain has written on "Prayer and Intelligence," and it is a fact that prayer opens a new eye within the brain, increases visibility, clears passions, controls "atmospherics," and so improves judgment. Therefore, by letting in the universal Wisdom, it is an anti-pessimist agent.

Half the battle of life for us men in the world is just to avoid making too many mistakes; not in being brilliant, but in escaping blunders. Here I do know that prayer has helped, by imposing a pause and wiser second thoughts that were none of my making. I will confess to other laymen that I despond (by nature) as much as any businessman, citizen or father, about livelihood, family and international trouble. In fact, if it will help any worrier to know it, I am a good case for observation and analysis, presumably!

That is to say, left to my natural devices, I would be in shreds long ago.

Some people are like that. It is temperamental and ancestral (and nothing to be proud of). But none of us is or need be left to our own fretful apprehensions and imaginations. And what I want to put in as evidence is that I achieve calm (when it is achieved) at and after Mass and Benediction. And, with calm, a sense of proportion, of right values and mastery. Certain it is that millions of people—in America, Britain, France, Germany, everywhere—would simply go to pieces but for this rallying, integrating force exerted at regular intervals. As it is, even the persecuted are keeping their heads and their Faith.

It is one of the forgotten secrets of this dangerous world that you cannot know the wrongs that have been prevented, the evils that you have been saved from unawares.

The hymn of Father Faber's mentions "the scanty triumphs grace hath won, the broken vow, the frequent fall," but what those who are utterly disappointed with themselves have to be reminded of is that the "scanty" triumph was better than none, and the vow did its temporary work. And our present-day world is only a sinner vastly magnified; it is grossly imperfect. But it is not hopeless, it is not rotted through. It knows its imperfections.

God has a number in every nation who will not be silenced. In Russia there is a renewed wave of "catacomb" religion which baffles official irreligion. In Germany, Cardinal Faulhaber and others speak out the mind of Christ, and irresistibly suggest misgivings even among the noisy persecutors and priest-baiters. In

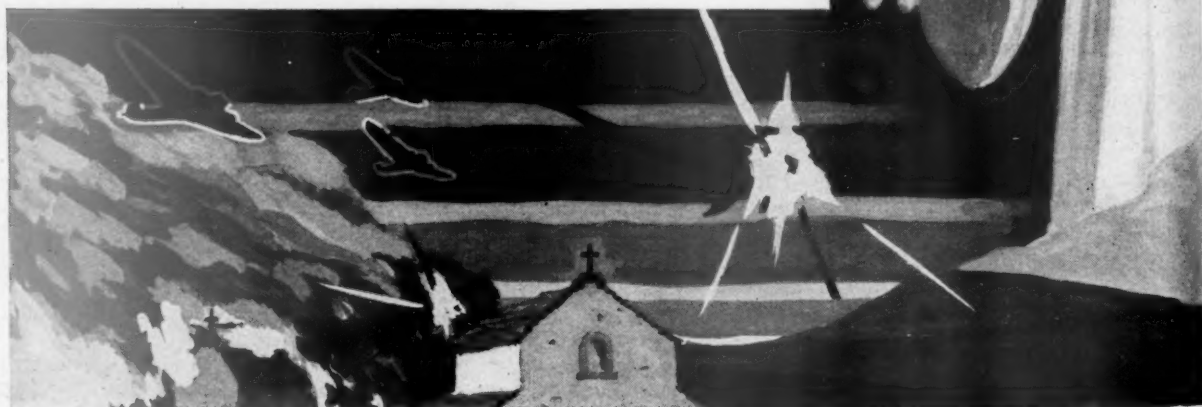
## SPIRITUAL

By W. J. BLYTON

half a dozen small countries in Europe I could name, the chief life-line sustaining the people's morale is their loyalty to the Holy See, and the influence of the Holy See for their protection. Yes, cynical as parts of the world are, none dare too openly or too far flout the spiritual Power.

We cannot tell—only superior intelligences probably know—how many times in the last year War was prevented, and by what moral unseen agencies.

And although in the inscrutable designs of Providence War has been permitted, all is not lost. God is the God of Battles and the God of Hosts, no less than the God of Peace. This severe fact is too easily avoided or slurred over. The everlasting writ runs just the same whether armies



# REALITIES

Decorations by PAUL GROUT

are mobilized or not. Spirit counts then, just as before, more than material or numbers. God can work in that medium quite as easily as in the economic or cultural. He can "inspire" a General. He can cause a small force to rout a large. (He did this in the "miracle of Warsaw," with the late Pope, then an Envoy, as eye-witness).

There is a fashion of saying "Another war will destroy civilization." What precisely does this mean? War would destroy tens of thousands of lives—the worst result of any war. It would destroy quantities of material and buildings, involving toil and expense in years to replace. It would curtail most amenities, and we should be obliged to say good-bye to many creature comforts.

Now for most people these are "civilization," these material adjuncts. It is a poor idea of civilization. The truth is that the calamity would leave many things upon the earth most worth having—it would leave the Faith, and the vast culture organic to it; it would leave family life and "pure religion breathing household laws"; it would leave Nature and its seasons and scenes, agriculture and its vital crafts, books and their influence. Life is creative, and though outward things perish it renews itself day by day. Life also is in essence spiritual, and not accessible in this aspect to bombs. Force is ultimately powerless against the interior higher life of men: "it is as the wind, thou canst not feel whence it cometh nor whither it goeth."

Just as a new civilization long ago re-started in America in log huts and covered wagons, with men from the old country, having nothing but their memories, their faith, and the clothes they stood in—so it would be in any new turning point of human history. It would be a terrible pruning, but growth would resume. The secondaries and luxuries would be lost for a generation or two, but somehow, somewhere, the Holy Sacrifice would be offered, the truth preached, the threads of study taken up, crops sown and cultivated, shelter and clothing found.

Catholics, whose eyes are trained to keep on the central things, have less excuse than anyone for panic or exaggeration. Those who live for the senses—the moneyed, the smug, the pampered—let them mistake the interruption of their comfort for the end of all things. We are of a Society which has survived many such inundations; ours is what the historian

Macaulay called "the unsinkable Church." The Ark will float whatever else sinks. It will rest on some Mount Ararat in a new dispensation, and will find the same human nature, sin, goodness, grace, Gospel and God. It is *she* who for 1900 years has told the world of "wars and rumors, of wars, men's hearts failing them for fear, signs in the heavens and on earth." Others outside see a few of these things, and lose heart and faith. But she who has perceived their inevitability all along is precisely the source of steady tranquillity.

"Well roars the storm to her who hears  
A deeper voice across the storm."

Give the Church, in any continent devastated by man, a priest and a farm, and from these two vital elements she could build up, out of holy people, a new culture and civilization. She has had a lot of practice at it with her Benedictines and other Orders serving as nuclei of sanity and reverence in a burnt, smashed and war-washed countryside. They built by lonely river or in the forest, and in a few years "the few monks rose from their knees and found themselves a city." What has already happened in the history of the Church can happen again—and will happen again even in our own days if the need for it arises.

She is the germ and the Mother of civilizations that are worth having. It is therefore unchristian to speak as though some madman and his army can ring down the curtain upon the spiritual and intellectual story of mankind before God's appointed time.



[Place: A sailing men's inn on the quay of Galway, that half-Spanish town in the West of Ireland.]

Characters: William Irish, the sailing man of Galway who signed for the Western voyage with the High Admiral Columbus but who—ill luck to the ships' lists—must have returned; Listeners—the trading folk, and dark reckless fighters, and poets of the city; and TIME—but TIME is a Shape in a Dark Cloak outside the inn, who has no part in this tale, save that of passing verdict upon it.]

# Western Enterprise

## Robert Palmer

Illustrated by PAUL KINNEAR

"WE dropped Palos one-half hour after sunrise—(The old man that was William Irish, the one who, in his youth, had gone into the Western ocean with the High Admiral Columbus, sat straighter against the inn wall.)

"I'll tell no words of our starting, for the history writers have put pens to that, spoiling the bright thought for your minds. Sure, but there's little enough, at last, the history writers are knowing!

"Oh, they can list the ships—the *Santa Maria*, the *Nina*, the *Pinta*—but do they remember them tossing on the deep Atlantic swell, bobbing and weaving like game, battered fighters? And the men, the ragged sun-scarred sailors—their names are dust in the books . . . And it's written how, dropping Palos we made a course for the Canaries. But where in the histories are the sobbing Spanish women; the sound of their grieving upon Palos quay? Nor are there words of the land sinking back, or of the lost feeling coming over us watching the warm dust of Spain blown off our clothes into the sea.

"It's not the names of the captains that stay down the years. Roderigo Sanchez of Segovia, Diego de Arana, Roderigo de Escobar, pouch-mouthed Pedro de Acevedo, Sancho Ruiz, he that was pilot for De la Cosa, the Biscayan. Faith! Rolling the names off one's tongue brings nothing! Perhaps a smell of sweaty Cordovan leather, or some brusque, hard-bitten jest—but nothing more.

"It's the small things which grip the mind, and these the very ones

that the history writers can never be getting. I recall the third day of sailing and a slow, black-breasted bird dropping across the sky. Good weather with the sails bellied out on the wind. Our fear I remember, and rain blur driving in harsh gusts against the drizzling shrouds . . . Comes back the dry sound of the hoists slatting . . . Come nights dark, with stars, and a drawn moon of gold—like a curved golden brooch upon a girl's dark hair . . .

"There was the sun westerling, and the windburnt sailors cawing out *Salve Regina—'Salve Regina . . .'*—ourselves singing, while the salt spray crawled along our backs. And our Admiral heading into the West. The great powerful build of the man, and his gray eyes waiting . . . All these the history writers forget!

"Listen then—Palos we dropped and steered for the Canaries . . ."

[*The three ships heading into the West. Any sailor has a warm place for them; and all young lads. The full-rigged, galleon-like flagship of the enterprise: Santa Maria. And after it, like coursing setters, beat the wee fast boats, the Pinta, the Nina—open amidships, with narrow high castles fore and aft—Good sailers the both of them.*]

(But hear William Irish):

"And for three weeks we halted in the Canaries, making over the *Nina's* lateen sails. Sweat dripping along the hot decks and the caulking malls loud in the close air. Until, at last, we took to the sea, beating past Ferro in the Canaries in a blue dusk. Sure, often after that would we try remembering the small rocky island. For beyond Ferro waited the blue plane of the sea, and

sky locked down along the sea's rim. Water (William Irish remembered). There was no other thing at all, in all our world.

"Westward we drove, and the sharp smell of the sea was ammoniac as a great stable's. Martin Pinzon bore ahead in the *Pinta*, remembering the pension for the one sighting the Chinese lands. Faith, Francisco Martin drove that vessel—a fine pilot. And the *Pinta* herself . . . Do you mind Colquitto Ryan's roan hunter? Hold it! Now you know the *Pinta*!

"Seven hundred and fifty leagues beyond the Canaries we took soundings, letting down the plummet lines between our hands. And there was no bottom. Listen now! There was no coward in those crews. Cut-throats and jail-birds, aye. Aye, the half of them scoured out of the Spanish ports. But of cowards there was none! Yet fear settled in us.

"And that day the captains came aboard the flagship, rowing across the water in their small boats. Amidships we of the crew waited, nursing the sullen edge of our fear . . . Came the Pinzon brothers, they who'd called 'Land!' a day back, seeing field birds against the sky. Their greedy souls—(William Irish muttered). Came raffish, dark-faced Bartolomeo Roldan, staring back into our ranks . . . All the leaders arguing and our Admiral shaking his white head . . .

"Our questions were a harsh mutter: 'Will they turn back now while turning is still left to us?' Or there'd be a darker whisper: 'Martin Pinzon could see us home. Just a heave and this Italian over the side—'

"And on the poop someone cursed stout Pedro Ferrer who'd gathered





*Our Admiral facing west and nights dark with stars. . . . What were his thoughts in those hours?*

the equipment. 'The food's spoiled'—the whisper ran like a mad dog. So we waited, chewing the stale curdle of our fear.

"But there was no turning back—only the course was moved west-southwest. From ship to ship the pilots shouting, rooks' voices cawing against the rising wind . . .

"So we swung west-southwest (William Irish was grim) and beat forward through three days . . . And about then fresh weeds came floating across the water, weeds and thorns that had bright red berries. But there was no believing in us now. There was just the water, its gray swell rising towards the locked, grim sky.

"Sure, the gauntness of fear was on us. And men grew acid-sharp eating the short rations. Oh, we waited in the riggings, casting down for fish,

but often there'd be only the dry, salt meat, or onions, and dry, rotten herbs. You'd be forcing down that swill and a huge, darkly blue tunny would drive past the stern. The sharp grief that was on us!

"There was a close sense of danger. A sullen, blind hatred. Just water, and the days passing with no change, and suddenly we knew nothing at all was worse than the wastes of sea . . . Hadn't even the compass needle gone wrong; tricked by the dark magicing ocean? And finally, on the 9th—that was October—Ruiz Garcia from Santone saw the carved staff bumping alongside.

"See the huddle of us below the poop, staring up at our Admiral, and him standing, eyes veiled, with the dark staff in his hands. Maestre Diego, the *contramaestre*, and lean Rodgiro Jerez, and such-an-one and

such-an-one whose names go from me, all waiting with the mutter of our fear loud in the air:

"'Tis a black curse that the wizards of Cathay send to slip us out over the world's end!

"Dear Christ! (William Irish remembered) . . . We were afraid—"

[*Read in the old books to know the fear that was on them . . . For the old books had the body of truth for the men of those days . . . Read there of the magicians of the Chinese country, their red and green magics . . . Of the spells cast by the Asian wizards that lay like snares along the caravan ways, darkness which could stop the nervous, rolling camels. So that against the vast twisted knowledge of the Chinese warlocks remained no safety except the Cross of Christ. But for that, was left no safety at all . . .*]

"From that day the canny ones among the leaders stayed close to their arms. But our course held—west-southwest, with the wind strong. Canvas filled and the yard-arms dark against the sky. Until, suddenly, after the great loneliness of the sea there was the noise of small birds. Imagine us crying at seeing live things again! Now there'd be a brown-hooded pelican over the rigging, or a heron. And by the side thorns floated past, pricked with scarlet berries, and green, unfamiliar plantings slipping along in our wake. Sure, the thought of land choked our throats. . . .

"But in the night watches, after the *Salve Regina*, there'd be only our Admiral restless upon the high poop. Backward, forward, pass, re-pass. . . . I'd watch him curling up against some bulwark, with the ache of the damp across my legs. Never once would the proud head turn during those nights. Our Admiral facing west and nights dark with stars. . . . What were his thoughts in those hours?

"Were the splendid Eastern lands in his mind—the clanging golden kingdoms of Messer Polo? Horsemen and caravans crashing down the Roof of the World. . . . Did he see Damascus and Trebizond, the ancient queen cities, himself marching toward them from the far side?

"Or was Jerusalem in his thoughts? . . . Was only the great body caged there on the lonely poop, while his heart warmed in the heat of Galilee, hearing the clear summons to crusade?

"Or—would come bitter thoughts: Does he know now the game is played and lost? Is he waiting there, knowing the luck's out, the last chance gone? Do Palos and the cursing crowds face him there in the black West? And fear would come with the wondering. For mightn't one swift fall down the world's end hold less terror for him than return to small meanness? But (William Irish was solemn) those last thoughts were wrong. There was no place in my Admiral's heart for bitter pride. No place at all.

"Listen now, for the end is ahead. All day we'd dogged the *Pinta*, with the wind leaning straight into the West, and on deck that night I saw our Admiral lean across the forward rail. Ten o' the evening. . . . And dark Pedro Guitierrez climbed be-

side him and there the two waited.

"But what ever they'd found slipped away. And the ships headed on while the crews cursed. The men of Palos and Santone, the swart rufflers out of Moguer, clustering against the night like worn, harried dogs. . . . 'Cathay ahead? Tis fire at the world's end and no more wine along the waterfronts—' The real lives of the crews came out in that night. For an ending was near. We felt that—the sure, unbeatable sense of happening. And one pilot became secretive, seeing the heaped treasure of the East, and another was whispering to a comrade: 'Should you see Palos again—God be good—say "Hello" to the wee boy, and be giving him this'—There came a clink of small coins. Thus we waited. . . .

"And guns boomed from the *Pinta*, until their long echo changed into the booming of surf. And now the small light was clear—just a faint, reddish glow, maybe two leagues off—no more, surely. . . . And, praying now, we took in sails and, the anchors reeved, stared out for dawn and the landfall.

"SO SWIFTLY, so quietly the land was before us. First the smell of earth, and suddenly the land itself. . . . like Spring coming upon the Kingdom of Kerry.

"We saw it. Level forested earth with dark trees that came down to darkly blue water (William Irish's voice was troubled with old feeling). Ourselves stony-quiet along the rail, wonder gripping us with a sudden stitch in the heart. . . . There was a terrible shining splendor as that land rose. First you felt mean, and then you knew thankfulness—a tug that swept the floodtides of the heart. . . . Sure, in that moment all of us, all the draggled, wind-bitten, quarrelsome lot, had our living. New land before us, showing in our eyes.

(William Irish stirred heavily) "So it was with us. But the thoughts in our Admiral's mind—sure, to have had those wouldn't all a man's life be well lost?

(Quiet in the Galway streets. And from outside came the swift cllop of a tinker's mule urging down the cobbled streets. The old man's voice crashed in the Galway dusk):

"Then we saw them—the people of that island! They raced down between the dark glossy trees—free running, straight men, and women with

the cleanness of swift water. They came to the sea's edge, their running an unbroken, flowing line of movement. And even then, lining the ships' sides, we sensed the green land ahead wasn't the Chinese countries. These copper-skinned, friendly folk—no weapons among them, mind ye, nothing but their harpoons, and woven fishing nets—these the crooked, careful men of China? . . . Aye, even then, with all the golden wealth of China weighing upon our minds, we sensed that much. To couple the proud open folk who waited across the low water with Messer Polo's hucksters? Faith, no!"

[*They man the boats now, the anchors cast, and the sun-scarred Spanish men go over the side. The surf slow; their guns move brassy in clear light . . . high golden light whips across Toledo blades.*

(But William Irish stirs spirits in the half-blue dusk. And, briefly, the copper-skinned folk seem real in Galway's streets. Feathers and vermilion clash against the worn, gray walls. Very real, the bronzed Western tribes move through the evening. And then their ranks break, the lean bodies, copper as the great copper drums of the Basque country, fading against the Connemara hills. For William Irish goes on with the telling of his tale):

"Our boats grounded along buckling sand and we leaped forward! Our Admiral on his knees, all in scarlet, and the rest kneeling. Stout Martin Pinzon and Vincente Yanez, his brother. Above them warm wind beat the standards, the royal banner, and the sea-stained Banner of the Enterprise. A quiet on us. . . .

"And then I saw our Admiral's face. . . . Saw him there—the stern, dark shadow that had paced the *Santa Maria's* poop, the poor supplicant at the Spanish court. That moment I knew the man. (William Irish almost whispered). The Admiral kneeling upon the still beach, before him the new, fresh people and the green land. . . .

"I knew him then. My Admiral" (William Irish choked). "Ah, there was a man!"

*From the inn's courtyard TIME, dark in a dark cloak scans the first stars, and they breaking above the grape-blue, distant hills: "Yes, sailing man," TIME gives verdict—"There was a man—"*

# DISTRIBUTISM

## A Revolution Backwards

By JOHN F. CRONIN, S.S.

Decorations by PAUL KINNEAR

RECENTLY we have heard much of the magic of words. Books have been written to prove that in these days men deal with empty symbols, not ideas. It is asserted that schemes which under one title would be denounced as radical, would be embraced in the most conservative club, if only the title be changed. If such really be the poverty of our intellectual heritage, the future of the movement called distributist is indeed dark.

Apparently there is no wealth of emotion in the word *distributism*. Unlike the other "isms," here is no rallying-cry for the disillusioned and embittered. Mention the word "liberty," and there rises a vision of the bleak winter at Valley Forge, the stormy July of the Bastille, the soul-stirring heroism of Verdun. To some,

"Fascism" means the hopeless pining of the concentration camp; to others, the glory of a nation reborn. There are those who find in "Communism" the message of man's release from all that is sordid, while most of us picture it in terms of sudden death and all-pervading terror. But "distributism" remains a dull, middle-class word, with an appeal only to the secluded scholar.

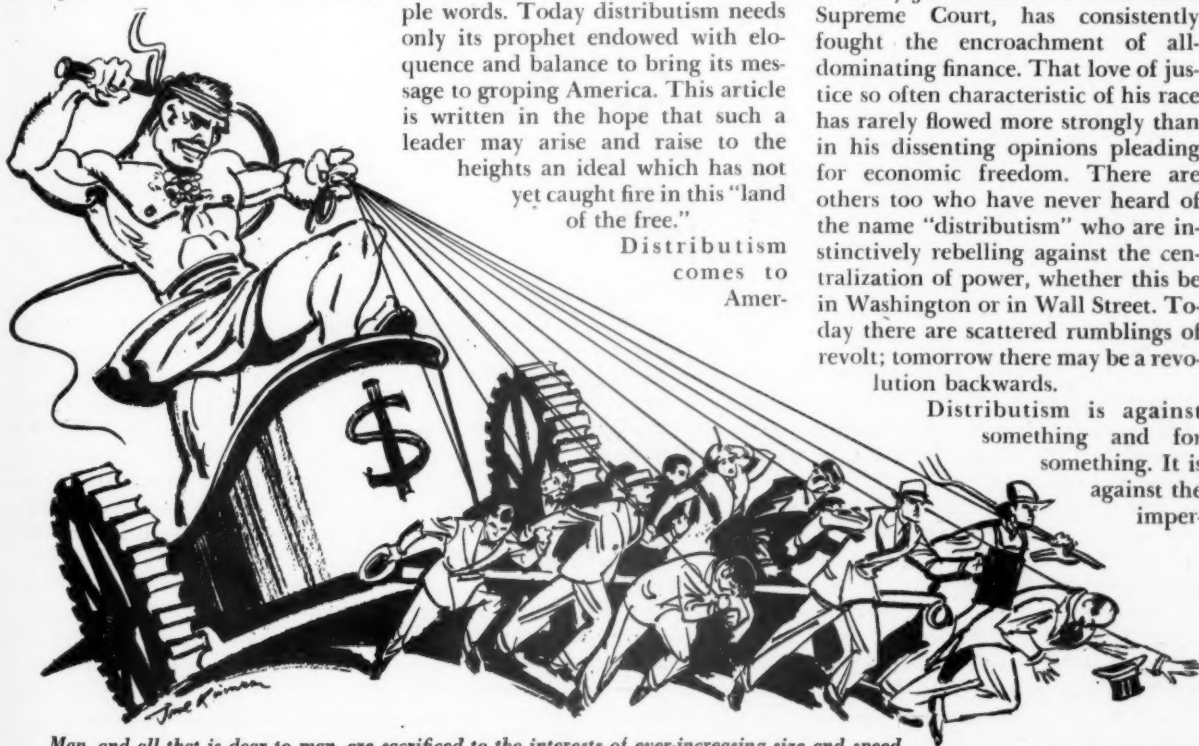
Fortunately, to most men the cynicism behind newly popularized semantics is a bit strained. We believe that the common man wants ideas, not empty words. The man of the street is a realist of the realists. We should not blame him when demagogues speak his language, while scholars hide the beauty of truth behind the veil of pedantry. Worthwhile ideas should be clothed in simple words. Today distributism needs only its prophet endowed with eloquence and balance to bring its message to groping America. This article is written in the hope that such a leader may arise and raise to the heights an ideal which has not yet caught fire in this "land of the free."

Distributism  
comes to  
Amer-

ican Catholics under high sponsorship. None less than the Jonathan and David of modern chivalry, the knights of the pen, Belloc and Chesterton, have fought valiantly for its tenets. Chesterton's appeal is well expressed by the title of his book, *Outline of Sanity*; while Belloc calls for *The Restoration of Property*. Both feel that something valuable has been lost in the conquering march of industrialism, and that modern life will not be sane until it is regained.

Of course, distributism is by no means a purely Catholic movement. Herbert Agar is not within our fold, although he is deeply sympathetic with much that is Catholic; yet his prize-winning *Land of the Free* is a nostalgic cry for the freedom of yesterday. Likewise, Louis Brandeis, formerly Justice of the United States Supreme Court, has consistently fought the encroachment of all-dominating finance. That love of justice so often characteristic of his race has rarely flowed more strongly than in his dissenting opinions pleading for economic freedom. There are others too who have never heard of the name "distributism" who are instinctively rebelling against the centralization of power, whether this be in Washington or in Wall Street. Today there are scattered rumblings of revolt; tomorrow there may be a revolution backwards.

Distributism is against something and for something. It is against the imper-



Man, and all that is dear to man, are sacrificed to the interests of ever-increasing size and speed



sonal and soulless nature of modern business; it is for a return to the more human and livable regime of our fathers. There are many aspects to this rich philosophy. Starting with the factory itself, these thinkers rebel against its barren immensity. In the modern plant, worker and employer are separated by an unbridgeable gulf. In contrast to the earlier stages of modern industrialism, where employer and employee met as human beings, not abstractions, the very numbers in the giant plant make personal contact virtually impossible.

FURTHERMORE, when the head is a banker or a board of directors in a distant state, acting for a voiceless group of stockholders, the separation is even more acute. The executive who orders economy in the interest of dividends does not see the dark despair on the face of the worker bereft of his job. His is not the bitter task of driving men harder and harder in order that costs may be cut to the minimum. He deals with the abstractions of finance, not the reality of wasted lives and ruined homes. And thus is made the bleak world where men are at the mercy of symbols.

To many, there are other unholy facets of the modern factory. The assembly line, with its endless repetition of the same operation, day by day, year by year, at an ever-increasing rate of speed as long as human endurance permits, reminds many of the fabled tortures of Hades. The worst that the Greek mind could invent for its conception of hell was monotonous futility, and some feel that it is not necessary to die today to obtain such a reward.

Moreover, the efforts to speed production, cut costs, and avoid unionism have frequently led to an odious and indefensible system of industrial espionage. In contrast, men say that in other days the spirit of craftsmanship developed the personality of the worker. But modern business often appears to stunt and paralyze the growth of the spirit.

Branching out from the factory, we come to the factory city, with its blighted area of slums and its perennial crop of crime and destitution. The modern large city gives much to men. It is gay for those who crave pleasure, and it is a center of learning for the more serious. There all that interests and edifies naturally gravitates; but there also are the festering

sores of vice and evil. It is a magnifying glass which amplifies alike the virtues and the faults of a people.

Yet the city of today is not entirely natural. It is sterile. It is a parasite which lives off the country. That it should draw its food from the farm is only to be expected, but it must also rely on the farm for its constant replenishing of population. Families do not take to the city. Home life is difficult in an apartment. The biblical blessing of numerous progeny is the exception rather than the rule in the steel fortresses where life is lived today. Here is the real curse which the distributist feels in the modern cult of bigness, that *man and all that should be dear to man are sacrificed to the interests of ever-increasing size and speed.*

The factory and the large city in their turn are but puppets of a higher power. They are ruled from another center where finance, not industry, is supreme. Industry today is corporate in form. It is true that there are hundreds of thousands of partnerships and proprietorships throughout the land, but they rule not in the key activities of manufacturing, mining and transportation. Here personal control has yielded to less direct method of corporate finance. Even among corporations a few hundred giants wield more power than the combined might of all the thousands of smaller fry.

Finally, in these giants, as has been shown in the able studies of Berle and Means, control is exercised not by the nominal owners, the stockholders, but rather by a self-perpetuating corporate board of directors. Thus step by step control is removed from the underlying realities, and men are pushed aside in favor of the intangibles of profit and loss. Whole regions of the country suffer the constant drain on their resources to a distant financial center, while the destiny of their citizens is decided by those who have no immediate interest in their welfare.

The South is the obvious sufferer from the concentration of financial power in the North and East. There we have a land abundantly blessed with the gifts of nature, yet so straitened financially as to be the "problem number one" of the nation. Rich lands are wasted in unprofitable cotton farming, great deposits of minerals lie unexploited, a benign climate which could shelter profitably

a large population now contains a small and undernourished group, and all this because of the burden of debt and the lack of capital for development.

Other regions are not entirely free from complaint. Much of the far west is completely under the control of New York. Its resources are drained and its citizens often exploited to pour wealth into a distant region. Even the wealthier inland cities, such as Chicago and Cleveland, are frequently under the control of Eastern finance. To build new factories or expand the present ones, they often must go to New York investment houses. These regions have the capital, but still are victims of the passion for centralization which obsesses our land. And where authority no longer resides in a community, how can it be called free?

The basic complaint of the distributist is that centralized power has destroyed the real *freedom* of America. The worker is not free. He is chained to a distasteful work, and at the mercy of an unknown and distant employer. The consumer is not free. Concentrated control and bigness have led to controlled high prices. The parent is not free. Forced to live in a large city, he finds the rearing of a family an almost insuperable burden. The citizen is not free. Either he finds that dominant economic power dictates to the sovereign people, or that the people have so centralized and concentrated political power that they endanger even greater liberties in the effort to find economic freedom.

THE heart of this difficulty lies in the lack of ownership on the part of the common man. Of course, a case can be made out, as was done by Father Keller of Notre Dame, for the widespread diffusion of ownership in the United States. Much depends upon the use of the word "ownership." Very many people indeed own homes, automobiles, and mechanical refrigerators. But such ownership does not give economic freedom. On the contrary, it is often a burden intensifying the insecurity of modern life. A minority of our farmers have unchallenged (by mortgage or other debt) title to their farms. This is good, but the speculative nature of modern economic life makes farming a life of anxiety and insecurity.

This same fear pervades small busi-



ness. The essential reason for this is to be found in the policies of the key industries of the country, the few hundred corporations which control the fundamental activities of mining, manufacturing and transportation. Here the appearance of ownership is scattered among millions of stockholders, but the reality of control is narrowly concentrated in the hands of a small number of interlocking groups.<sup>1</sup>

From such control sprang the frenzied finance of the 1920s. But such control means that really important productive property is not in the hands of the common man. It means that economic activity is more and more impersonal. The men who deal in realities have not control; the men who have control have no contact with the underlying realities. They talk in terms of finance while men rot and perish. There is much private enterprise, but little private property.

Pope Pius XI felt very strongly about this matter. While the word "distributism" is not found in the American translation of any of his encyclicals, yet many of these ideas are incorporated there. Paging through *On Reconstructing the Social Order*, we note his comments on the chasm of inequality existing between social classes; his argument that "earthly goods so abundantly produced in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men;" his statement that organic social life is ruined, with all the institutions which acted as buffers between the individual and the state now destroyed; his bitter condemnation of speculation and corporate ir-

responsibility; and finally, his lament that "dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded."

Faced with these problems, the distributists advocate a return as far as possible to the earlier ideals of American yeomanry. They would decentralize industry by fostering as far as possible a link between the factory and the land. Small factories in rural communities would replace the parasitic industrial cities. Farming in its turn would be rendered less commercial and more along the lines of the self-sustaining unit. Ownership would be local. Much of production would be done by small craftsmen and by enterprisers of moderate size. The market for these products again would be regional or local, doing away with the element of insecurity which is inevitable in large-scale production for a distant and speculative market. Independence and personal creative work (and also personal recreation to replace the mass, passive recreation of the cities) would be the guiding principle of the new order.

Except for a few extremists, most distributists would not bar mass production, much less machine production. In principle, they would not object to having certain industries produce for a national or international market. But in general they feel that the economies of large-scale production have been exaggerated. After a certain size is reached, a plant can economically grow no further. Additional growth means simply the erection of similar plants in distant cities. Such multiplication, however, gradually leads to control over the market and the strong (and often successful) temptation to concentrate on stock speculation rather than business policy. Inefficient, unprogressive bureaucracy, based on entrenched

power, replaces early initiative and energy. The growing giant becomes a sprawling monster athwart the path of progress. Long before this stage is reached, the distributist would cry "stop."

Distributism is not a philosophy of dreamers. Hard-headed business men see much sense in its tenets. As a matter of fact, there exists a definite trend toward the decentralization of certain industries. Some of this represents merely an effort to continue sweatshop wages and to escape the more rigid laws of certain states, but much too is a recognition of the drawbacks of the large city. With fine roads for transportation, and electricity for power, there is often little reason for industry to risk the congestion and expense of the megapolis. Furthermore, certain seasonal industries discover that their busy period coincides with slack time on the farm. A mutually profitable relationship thus springs up. Such incidents occur so often today that it is no exaggeration to call them a trend.

Even finance is becoming decentralized. A number of important corporations have recently dropped Wall Street connections and moved their offices back to the center of operations. Being self-sufficient financially, they were able to renounce the burdensome thralldom to the capital of finance. Investment banking is feeling the effects of the new spirit. Houses in the inland cities, instead of subserviently reaching for the crumbs falling from the great tables of the New York houses, are rather seeking the cream of the business for themselves. While the House of Morgan issues edicts against competitive bidding for bonds, inland houses quietly are taking over the new railroad issues. This indeed may be called a revolution backwards.

<sup>1</sup> The writer regrets the necessity of making this important statement without proof. Such proof would require a separate article. But it can be found in Berle and Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, or, more popularly, in Allen, *The Lords of Creation*.

There are sporadic political movements which may follow in the spirit of distributism. The interstate compacts of recent years have often replaced Congressional laws. Many communities are making efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in the political and economic sphere. Furthermore, laws which hamper bigness are being found in more and more states. Some of these may be ill-conceived, such as price-fixing laws which often lead to unholy alliances between manufacturer and distributor against the consumer. There are direct laws against chain stores, a real penalty upon bigness. Perhaps many of these laws are too drastic, nullifying the economies of large-scale distribution, rather than restoring freedom to the great bulk of men. But they indicate a trend of the times.

It must not be assumed that there are no objections against distributism. On the contrary, it faces many moral and economic difficulties. As Morgan, Sr., remarked, "You can't unscramble an omelette." Breaking up concentrated industry without injustice to stockholders may well be a formidable task. Methods which would dispense with the real economies and efficiencies of modern production and distribution are likewise open to grave suspicion. The economic practices of the nineteenth century are hardly sufficient to support the population of today.

Again, under our present system, much of the exploitation of labor is done in small, poorly managed factories. Such exploitation is more easily controlled in large centers than in small towns. The consumer is certainly better favored today in many chain stores than he was thirty years ago in the old country store. Thus it would be a grave mistake indeed to concentrate only on the seamy side of industrialism. It is easy to idealize the past, and to see none but the worst features of modern life. But truth which is not the entire truth is often a dangerous weapon.

Certain features of distributism compel approval. Its ideal of economic freedom, decentralized industry, and family life in small towns and cities, can hardly be questioned. At the same time, it would be wrong to confuse the concrete proposals of individual writers with the heart of the system. Such an admirable writer as Agar permits himself some very confused pages on finance, drawn largely

from the Communist, John Strachey. The great Belloc becomes involved in a labyrinth of penalty taxation. Borsodi would restore the spinning wheel to every home. We might well distinguish between the ideals of the movement, and certain measures for carrying out these ideals. Furthermore, we may be permitted to ask if these ideals may be obtained in a less revolutionary fashion.

It may be that distributist aspira-

## Bread Line

By MARY FABYAN WINDEATT

*There is a searching, a seeking  
All the day long,  
Begging a boon but briefly,  
A song  
Of hope from a far away Heaven  
To have and hold  
Ever against all hard hunger,  
cold.*

*What shall be done when dull  
kneeling  
Brings no relief?  
God save the hearts that weaken  
In grief.  
The hearts of the bitter, the  
fearful  
With doubt-filled eye—  
God love all martyrs who do not  
die!*

tions can be grafted on the present economic system. Thus, the essence of labor freedom is not the title of ownership, but the ability to make some decisions about daily work, the assurance that such work will persist, and the general feeling of dignity which follows from power and security. Much of this, however, can be obtained from labor unionism or various voluntary reform measures. The papal plan of occupational groups does not necessarily presuppose small groups. Sharing of management, profits and ownership could well bring about many of the distributist ideals.

The domination of finance might be broken without too drastic measures. Certainly the laws regulating security issuance and trading have

already done much to remove the incentive for financial wizardry. Better regulation of corporate charters and stiffer requirements for membership on the board of directors (as in the O'Mahoney bill for federal incorporation) could remove many of the glaring evils of the "New Era." Progress along these lines might obviate the danger of removing the baby with the bath.

A gentle and gradual program of discriminatory taxation (nothing like drastic taxes of some states) might again favor the trend towards decentralization into smaller, independent units. Such methods, being slow and evolutionary, are more likely to conserve the good of the old while seeking the better of the new. Sympathy with the distributist ideal does not demand alliance with pressure groups working for legislation superficially similar to it, but based on a different spirit and tending in a different direction.

At any rate, distributism should be talked about. Discussion groups might well read the social encyclicals in the light of Agar, Belloc and Chesterton. They would find a strong similarity of spirit between the two philosophies. But in facing the more concrete proposals, a spirit of skepticism might be excused. The blueprints of the new society are not to spring from thin air, but to evolve from pre-existing institutions. Common sense and justice dictate the conserving of all that is good in the old, before replacing it with the new.

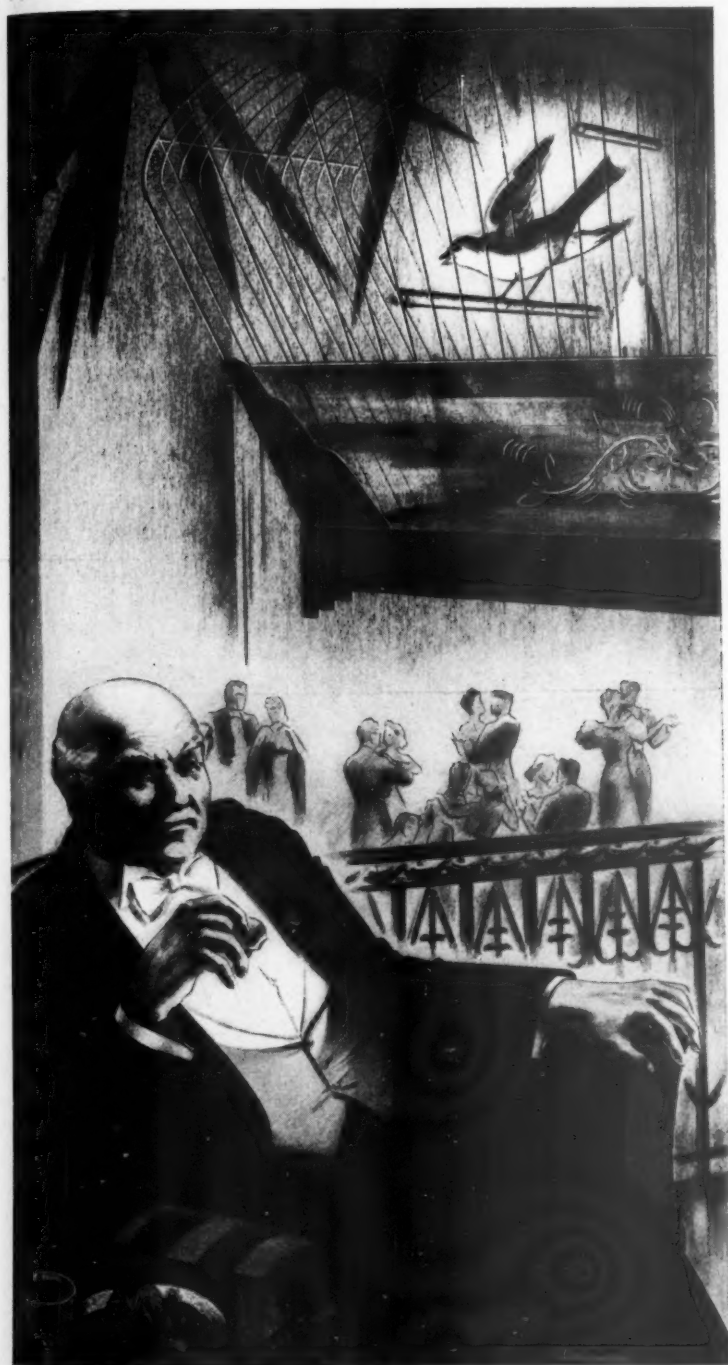
Hence, if we take distributism seriously, and we should do so, we must make it practical. Some tentative suggestions are offered above, as evolutionary means of obtaining the ideals of the movement. They are offered merely to stimulate study. After this, American social thought can then contribute the three-fold gift of sympathy, sanity and sound suggestions to a really vital movement.

*Editor's Note:* Father John F. Cronin, S.S., will contribute several important articles to forthcoming issues of THE SIGN. In "Consumer Co-operatives: Utopia or Delusion?" he will give an objective and penetrating analysis of the co-operative movement. In "The Economics of the Spirit" he will discuss a new movement among Catholics for an exclusively personal and spiritual approach to the Social Problem.



# THE CANARY

NAOMI GILPATRICK



"I HAVE no friends," grumbled the fat man, as he plucked away the heart-shaped leaves of the artichoke. "Only my canary."

"But your wealth . . .?"

"Oh, yes, plenty of that. Money clings to me. It just comes. Even my artichoke farm is a good investment."

"Artichoke farm . . .?" The tall, thin man raised his brows.

"Yes, didn't I tell you about it?" He brightened visibly. "Worth ninety thousand. Even my wife doesn't know that. But I have no friends. My only fun in life is beating the tax collectors."

"How do you manage it?" The thin man lit a cigarette and leaned forward.

"Easy. They're a bunch of saps! Take my property in Jacksonville, where I keep my art treasures. The public thinks the state owns it. Ha!"

The dancing and revelry made conversation difficult even in the spacious drawing-room. The fat man had drawn his friend to a table behind the palms.

"Quieter. Not so conspicuous," he had explained.

Even on his birthday—and this party was in honor of his birthday—Van Divelstorm had no wish to be observed. He had remained too long the officious "man behind the scenes" to want a spotlight. Shrewd and calculating, he did not trust social gatherings. Too much profitable time wasted. Too many secrets disclosed.

His wife managed the social angle. She was expensive like all his possessions, but she wore her jewels well and had regard for his whims.

"The state can't tax me for her," he confided with a smirk to the man across the table.

She could do what she wanted. They had reached that arrangement years ago. He had relinquished twenty-two rooms in the house to her. The other three he kept for himself—his bedroom, a private dining-nook and a study for his canary. But she was a decided asset to him. Tall, shimmering, glamorous, she filled the house with life and color.

"But why can't she leave me alone?" he complained to his companion.

He was here in the midst of this frivolity merely because he had extracted a promise from her that he would not be obliged to mix with her friends.

"But we can't leave you alone," she had remonstrated.

Then the idea had come to him. That

Illustrated by ROBERT ALLAWAY

"You know," he mused, "I sometimes think that these leaves are alive . . . that they have a heart."

chap in the club—quiet-speaking and friendly—reading his paper and not bothering with anyone—the man who had offered him a cigar and agreed with him about the Neutrality Act—he'd do! He seemed lonely.

"I have a friend," he had said to her with dignity. "It seems to me that if I leave you to your friends, you could return the courtesy and leave me with mine. It isn't often I ask a favor."

"Of course, Edward, if you insist . . ."

"I mean it. That conniving bunch of yours will be disappointed. All their plans for making me sign away my summer home to them will be shot. But if one of them comes near me, I'll break up these parties once and for all."

"People aren't always trying to get things out of you, Edward."

"I wish I could be sure of that."

"You should have more faith in people and they'd return your trust and friendship."

"Trust and friendship! Well, I have a friend. But I wouldn't trust yours within ten feet of me! Shake hands with one of them and you find yourself with a pen and check-book. I've had enough of 'em!"

"If you gave more . . ."

"Give! What else have I been doing for your friends? And what do I get out of it? You never invite anyone who'd be a profit."

"I didn't mean that, Edward. I meant give of yourself and your friendship . . . Oh, well. We'll leave you to your friend."

He did not like the ugly emphasis on that last word. He winced. He'd show them! He had friends, too.

**H**IS PARTICIPATION in the party had been a few mumbled words of thanks for their gifts and congratulations and a brief nod of acknowledgement when they touched their glasses in his honor.

"All they want is my money," he sputtered when he had retired to the corner with his friend, ". . . every danged one of 'em!" He barked an order for refreshments at one of his servants and added with a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders, "Well, I used my brains to get it; I guess I still have some brains left to keep it!"

"Good for you!" applauded the other softly.

"I owe much to you, young man.

You've saved me a lot of trouble tonight."

"I'm privileged to be here."

"Not at all! Not at all! Glad to have you. I like you—did the first day you spoke to me in the club. They think we're old friends. I guess it's our confidential manner. I wouldn't ramble on this way to anyone but you, but if it serves to keep them away, I'll keep it up all evening . . . not but what I like you too. You're real. No flattering or fawning." He held up an artichoke leaf and stared at it half-vacantly.

"I'm interested in you, sir, and might be able to make some pertinent suggestions about your Long Island project . . ."

"Sh! not so loud," the fat man warned, looking around carefully. "That's a secret. Better see me tomorrow. I want you to see my canary anyhow—cheeriest chap in the whole house. You two ought to get along. From now on, I'm going to have a friend of my own. . . . See my wife over there?" he broke off suddenly.

His companion followed his gaze and nodded.

"What if I stamped blusteringly up to her and asked her what she did with the gold cocktail shaker she smashed last night?" His voice rose hysterically. "Why, she'd say sweetly, 'My dear, there's more where that came from!' More! They all know it. You're the only one who has ever shown me any friendship untinged with avarice." He put a quivering hand to his forehead.

The other sought to divert him. "I imagine that Egyptian urn has a history."

"The one with the ruby rose work around the center? There's a burglar alarm concealed in that. It's worth forty thousand."

The music rose in crescendo. He looked up with a wild stare.

"Do you think I would be asserting myself if I threw that jar at my wife's breast? . . . but what's the use? It'd bounce back . . . yes, it'd bounce back! Her heart is harder than gold. But let's not talk about such things any more . . . about how much they cost. I've chewed that meager pleasure to the bone. There's no more meat on it now. I'm crazy, I guess." He took a long pull at the expensive wine that sparkled in his glass.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Van Divelstorm, and tell me more about those mines in Brazil."

"I have a headache from them now. Why must money and possessions dog me? I'm not even a beggar at my own feast. Just a bankbook that hobbles around on gouty legs."

He removed an artichoke leaf that fairly quivered with tenderness and stared at it for a moment.

"You know," he mused, "I sometimes think that these leaves are alive . . . that they really have a beating heart. You'd understand. Maybe sometimes," his voice sank sadly, "people have a faint suspicion that I'm alive too. What a ridiculous fancy!"

He gulped the leaf. His friend arose.

"Oh, don't go!" he cried, detaining him with his hand. "Don't," he pleaded. "You're the only friend I have, the only one who ever listened to me . . . the only one not connected with that mangy crowd. Please don't go!"

"I'll be back," the man promised suavely.

**E**DWARD VAN DIVELSTORM watched him dumbly as he threaded his way through the swaying couples. He saw him disappear into the cloak-room and emerge, escorted to the door by the butler.

"I don't know his name! The only friend I have!"

He started up heavily, looked first in the direction of his wife, and then lumbered over irresolutely toward the butler.

"Davis," he said half apologetically, ". . . that man. I'm sorry. I didn't catch his name."

"The one you were talking to, sir? I was worried, sir, but he presented a signed invitation at the door. I was going to speak to you, but Madame bade me not to. His name is Robertson. He's the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for New York."

"Wha-at?"

"Yes, sir. I trust, sir, that everything was all right?"

"All right? Man alive! I thought he was a friend."

"Friends are hard to tell, sir."

"Especially when you talk with gold, Davis. I thought that tonight would be different . . . that I had found a living friend."

"Too bad, sir."

"My canary is my only friend."

"The gold one, sir?"

"The . . .? Yes, Davis, damn it, the gold one!"

# Neutrality in Modern War

By WALTER JOHN MARX

**M**OST Americans are heartily in favor of maintaining a neutrality which will keep our country out of the present war, but a goodly number would like to see us help England and France by the sale of munitions and raw materials. Another smaller but even more powerful group is eager to take advantage of the commercial opportunities growing out of the war, on the one hand by supplying the Allied countries, on the other by capturing a large part of their trade with neutral nations. It can be seen that these views are by no means conflicting, but they do betray a rather complete ignorance of the methods of modern warfare where economic strife is fully as important as military operations.

When we speak of neutrality and neutral rights, too many of us forget how these were treated in the World War and instead we call to mind our traditional claims to the freedom of the seas and think of the War of 1812 when both England and France seized our ships while we were attempting to carry on a lawful trade with Europe. Without going into the rather dry and now quite academic discussion of the various international conventions and declarations entered into between the War of 1812 and the War of 1914, it is enough to point out that under the stress of modern war all agreements went by the board and Germany was not the only country in 1914 to look upon treaties as scraps of paper.

The rights of neutrals could not be allowed to interfere with the

war plans of the Allied nations, and not long after the war started American ships were being stopped and searched by English warships in a much more complete and thorough fashion than in 1812. Before long our commerce with even the neutral nations such as Holland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark was practically forbidden by the British government and every American ship bound for Europe had first to put into an English port for examination and search. Naturally, strong protests were made but we remember that our Ambassador, Walter Page, was so much on the side of the Allies that in presenting our complaints to Lord Gray, he would sit on the edge of the British minister's desk and ask, "Now how shall we answer this?"

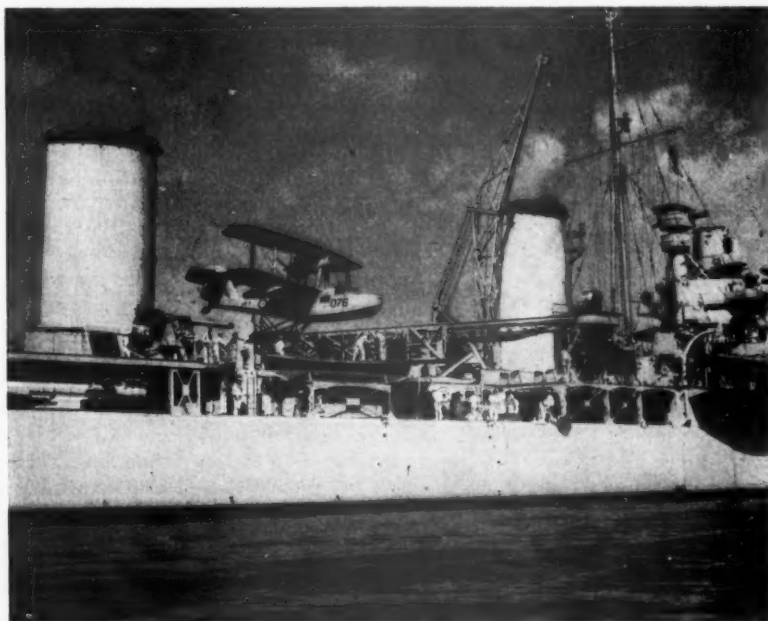
Nevertheless, in the last war, the fear of offending the powerful United States did slow down the extinction of the rights of the neutral powers so that the process took about two years. When we finally entered the war, curiously enough,

we became the most vigorous in destroying the remaining rights of neutrals and clamped down a complete embargo on even foodstuffs going to the starving neutral countries which bordered on Germany.

The probable fate of Scandinavia, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and the Baltic States in the present conflagration can be forecast from a brief examination of the record of the World War. Then, England and France experimented with varying methods designed to strangle Germany economically. Today, with the lessons of the World War in mind, we can expect much swifter and more decisive action. But Germany too has learned much from the World War and, as we know, she has taken almost extreme measures to make herself as self-contained as possible in order to prevent a repetition of the strangulation of 1918. But it is not the purpose of this article to discuss the effects of the World War blockade on Germany but rather the fate of the various neutral powers in modern war.

With the British fleet in control of the North Sea, our trade with Germany was cut off almost from the beginning of the war but we prospered by selling extra large amounts of raw materials to the bordering neutral nations. An outline of the steps taken in the last war may give some indication of the probable steps in the present one.

On Aug. 6, 1914, the United States telegraphed the belligerents requesting their attitude in regard to inter-



European Photo

Britain will probably again use her sea power to enforce a blockade of Germany in spite of neutral opposition. H.M.S. Sydney catapulting a seaplane



national maritime law. Since Germany did not have control of the sea she readily agreed to observe maritime law and did so until the English naval blockade forced her to launch her unrestricted submarine campaign. But learning that shiploads of corn were coming from the United States to Rotterdam, Holland, for transfer by way of the Rhine to Germany, the English and French declared that such material as foodstuffs was conditional contraband and would be stopped from going to a neutral country when there was good reason to suppose that its ultimate destination was Germany. This decree of Aug. 25th enabled the Allies to stop practically all foodstuffs as well as raw materials going to neutral ports from the United States.

THE United States immediately protested the claim of the Allies to the right of capturing neutral merchandise while in transit from a neutral American port to a neutral Dutch or Scandinavian port. The Allies in September made a concession by removing cotton from the list of conditional contraband but placed many other items on the list and then put the full weight of proving innocence upon the owner of the captured goods.

On Dec. 26th the United States made another protest, but the English replied rather caustically that the tremendous increase in the trade figures between the United States and the neutral countries showed plainly that our goods were finding their way into Germany. Consequently, an elaborate system was set up by which all neutral ships bound for Europe were forced to put into English ports for search.

On Nov. 3, 1914, France and England took diplomatic action in the capitals of the neutral powers in Europe to persuade them to ban the export of mineral oils, gasoline, copper, india rubber, hides and leather, fodder and certain categories of foodstuffs, such as corn, flour and meat. This would practically amount, of course, to the banning of all trade with Germany.

It is well to note that today as in 1914, England has not declared a blockade of the German coast in the sense that the word is used in international law simply because she cannot control the Baltic coastline of

Germany. And because a blockade had not been declared in 1914, the United States protested throughout 1915 because of the stopping and seizure of our ships bound for neutral ports.

A consideration which made the government of the United States extremely suspicious was the undoubted fact that while prohibiting neutral commerce with neutrals, England herself was profiting greatly by a lucrative trade with these same neutrals. The only excuse the English made was that American trade had increased even more greatly than theirs. However, this American trade, booming in the first two years of the war while England was afraid of offending the United States too greatly, was gradually curtailed by England once the submarine warfare made the United States even angrier with Germany.

The great fear of the English was that the United States in desperation might convoy her merchant ships with cruisers and thus break down the whole Allied scheme for the control of commerce between the neutrals. Open conflict almost broke out between Holland and England when the Dutch tried to convoy supplies in this manner bound for the East Indies.

But it is most important to remember that by 1916 American trade with the Allies, especially in arms and ammunition, had increased so tremendously that we simply could not dare protest too vigorously at the limitation of our trade with the neutrals. In other words, our economic system had become so dependent on Allied orders that we could not risk even an economic rupture with them as Jefferson did in his day by the Embargo Act. Economically we had become the partners of England and France and our protests lost what little weight they had previously had. Our trade with neutral countries in Europe was now fully under the control of England and France and the small neutral countries were now forced to ration their populations just as the Germans were doing even though not at war, for the Allied control did not allow the importation of sufficient food supplies.

Space does not permit a further detailed account of the manner in which the Allies obtained control of practically the entire merchant ton-

nage of Europe and even prevented the sale of home-grown produce by the neutral nations to Germany. In general England put the merchant fleets of the world to work for her by her unique position as a large coal producer and as the owner of most of the world's coaling stations. She simply refused to supply coal to those merchant ships which did not "co-operate," that is, which did not stop for search and later in the war, which refused to place themselves under charter to the British. Huge black lists were drawn up and any shipping company on the list found that its ships would not be supplied with coal. Ships of neutral powers sailing from England were no longer allowed to go in ballast but were forced to carry coal for ports even considerably out of their way.

On Feb. 1, 1917, Germany opened unrestricted submarine warfare, not only to strike at England but to frighten neutral ships so that they would stay in their ports and thus not be employed by England. Two days later President Wilson broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and on April 6th we declared war. The situation of the neutral powers then became really desperate, for the most powerful neutral of all had now entered the war and England and France were no longer forced to go slowly for fear of offending the United States. In fact the United States was determined to go farther than the Allies and called for the forbidding of any exportation whatever to neutral countries adjacent to Germany. But England hesitated at losing her trade with the neutrals in the North Sea which had almost doubled since 1913. She also could not afford to lose the foodstuffs which she received from these same countries.

ON JULY 9, 1917, Wilson signed the General Embargo which prohibited most essential materials from leaving our ports without a special license, and in order to have time to examine the situation of each neutral, the exportation of all foodstuffs to them was forbidden prior to December, 1917. England and France followed the Embargo as best they could, considering prior agreements already made for the exportation of such things as coal to these countries.

However, the submarine war had

seriously crippled the merchant fleets of the Allies and had achieved one of its purposes in frightening all but the Norwegian fleet into staying in harbor. The immediate problem of the Allies was to force these neutral ships back into the carrying trade. This was done by various methods: one, the rather questionable act known as the law of angary, was invoked to enable England to make use of neutral tonnage in her ports for her own ends. Another method was a species of blackmail.

ENGLAND with the collaboration of her allies would stop all coal and oil deliveries to neutral nations until they signed an agreeable treaty putting all or a part of their merchant fleets at their disposal. Norway had already placed her two million tons of shipping at the disposal of the Allies and consequently suffered heavily from submarine attacks. Sweden was coerced into placing 400,000 tons of shipping at the disposal of the Allies in May, 1918, and in June, 1917, Denmark had been forced to give the Allies 200,000 tons of shipping. Only the Dutch, because of German pressure, refused to be coerced in this fashion and stubbornly kept their ships in port. So President Wilson invoked the law of angary, seized the whole of Dutch shipping in American ports, and placed these 700,000 tons at the disposal of the Allies.

While ships could be seized it was a more difficult matter to control the internal trade of the neutral nations with Germany. Sweden supplied Germany with iron ore, Denmark and Holland and Switzerland with butter, beef and other foodstuffs. The Allies tried to stop this trade, a legal trade of course according to international law, by coercing the neutrals by refusing to ship them the fodder necessary for their cattle. Denmark was particularly favored, however, in that she produced enough fodder for her cattle. This was not true of Holland and Switzerland who were so injured by this refusal that England's purpose was at first checkmated.

Being unable to import fodder for their cattle, the Swiss and the Dutch were forced to kill their animals and the result was a tremendous increase in their exportation of beef to Germany. However, since these countries were dependent on the Allies

for essential raw materials and food, they were finally brought into the economic orbit of the Allies and their trade with Germany strictly limited.

The lesson to be drawn from this picture of the World War blockade of Germany is quite clear: when nations are fighting a life and death struggle they are not at all scrupulous about the rights of neutrals, about paper treaties, or about international law. The Allies simply refused to allow the small neutral countries bordering on Germany to remain strictly neutral in the conflict. They were forced to place their shipping and productive resources at the disposal of the Allies and were forced to curtail greatly their normal trade with Germany.

There is little evidence that the neutrality of these countries will be any easier to preserve in the present conflict. However, even though an attempt by England to revive her World War blockade finally succeeds, the small neutrals are in a better position now than they were in 1914. This is particularly true in regard to needed fertilizers. Belgium alone can produce enough synthetic nitrates to supply herself and the whole Oslo block of neutrals. In each country, there has been some attempt at autarchy, at least within the block, and if the neutral powers adopt a common policy and preserve freedom of trade among themselves, they will not be so readily coerced by England's withholding of vital raw materials. The engaging by Belgian airplanes in combat with English planes flying over Belgian territory is an indication of Belgium's insistence on her strict neutrality.

There is a possibility too that England will not push matters to the extreme she did in the World War when we consider the changed situation of Russia in this conflict. Russia can supply most of the materials Germany had most need of in the World War. Furthermore, Germany has kept open the normal trade route of the Danube with the Balkan countries and apparently will continue to obtain Rumanian oil, for she has announced that she intends to keep on honoring orders for guns and munitions placed in her factories by Rumania and other Balkan nations. In view of the above sources of supply and also in view of Germany's tremendous effort at

self-containment, hopes of a repetition of the collapse of 1918 are likely to be in vain.

But in the course of the conflict there is little hope that we can go back to our traditional freedom of the seas, championed in 1812. And if we persist in our rights we are bound to conflict with the blockade policy of England and France. On the other hand, if we limit ourselves to trading with them and stop our trade with the neutrals in Europe, we become as it were economic partners in the war and as the volume of trade piles up, as our war time prosperity increases, it becomes more and more difficult for us to insist on our neutral rights.

Under these circumstances, as in 1917, to protect our war prosperity and to salvage our creditor claims on France and England, we shall be forced finally to take military action at their side. Hence we should exercise the greatest possible discretion in amending our present Neutrality Act in order to ship arms and munitions to England and France. We learned in the past that this leads inevitably to war. Better a curtailment of our foreign commerce now than our entry into war or the other alternative of an economic collapse when allied credits become exhausted in this country. The time to make the choice is now, not when we are already seriously involved economically.

IN VIEW of our accumulation of the major share of the world's gold, any war prosperity would be an illusion since it would mean simply the accumulation of further stocks of gold of doubtful value to our economic life, the gradual taking over by Americans of stocks and bonds now held by foreign nationals in this country and then the sale of goods on credit. In the long run it would be the sort of prosperity achieved by a manufacturer who would loan his customers enough money to enable them to keep his plant producing at full capacity. We could of course insist upon our right to trade with Belgium, Holland, etc., but the only way to make good our claims would probably be to convoy our merchant ships by naval forces. But since this would be most embarrassing to England and France it is not likely that we shall attempt it.

# Saints Have Distractions

THE self-confessed weaknesses of holy persons endear them to us; every time we happen upon their accounts of their struggles with distractions during prayer, for instance, we take comfort in the fact that we have something in common with them. We have no experience with ecstasy, but we can match distractions with any saint.

We need no ascetic writer to define the difficulty. "Distraction" is derived from the Latin *distrāhere*, "to draw away." If our thoughts wander during prayer we presently become distressed; the saints have suffered in a like manner, and fortunately for us many of them have recorded their trials.

Perhaps no saint's account is more naïve, certainly none is more touching, than little Saint Thérèse's description of how annoyed she was by the restiveness of a Sister whose place at meditation was near hers; the continual fidgeting distracted the young Carmelite until she declared that "meditation consisted merely in suffering in patience. . . Instead of trying not to hear it, which was impossible, I set myself to listen, as though it had been some delightful music, and my meditation—which was not the 'prayer of quiet'—was passed in offering this music to Our Lord."

Clicking rosary beads, whispered orisons, marbles rolling out of altar boys' pockets, even a grasshopper perched on the collar of our bald-headed neighbor in church and ourselves reckoning the insect's chances as a skier if it mounts the slippery peak, are simply outside disturbances and easier to bear with than the persistent whirl of thought that we all know. Job himself cried out: "My thoughts are dissipated, tormenting my heart," and valiant Saint Augustine, having treated of memory and curiosity in his *Confessions*, mourns that, "whilst in Thy presence we direct the voice of our heart up unto Thy ears, so important a business is broken off by I know not what idle thoughts."

By DAISY H. MOSELEY

The great Saint Teresa of Avila, one of the most accomplished of spiritual writers, referred frequently to distractions. Her "Daughters," for whom she wrote *The Interior Castle*, must have been solaced by this passage: "We cannot stop the revolutions of the heavens as they rush with velocity upon their course, neither can we control our imagination. When this wanders, we at once imagine that all the powers of the soul follow it; we think that everything is lost, and that the time spent in God's presence is wasted. Meanwhile, the soul is perhaps entirely united to Him in the innermost mansions, while the imagination is in the precincts of the castle, struggling with a thousand wild and venomous creatures and gaining merit by its warfare. Therefore, we need not let ourselves be disturbed nor give up prayer. . ."

That, of course, was written when Teresa had had years of experience; no beginner ever prayed more by main force than did she. You recall

Decorations by HARLEY GRIFFITHS

the lines in her *Autobiography*, " . . . very often, for some years, I was more occupied with the wish to see the end of the time I had appointed for myself to spend in prayer, and in watching the hour glass, than with other thoughts that were good." Hour glasses have yielded place to electric clocks, but the habit of watching still prevails. And many a modern could sympathize with her in her admission, "my soul was as much afraid to pray without a book, as if it had to fight against a host. With a book to help me—it was like a companion, and a shield whereon to receive the blows of many thoughts."

Teresa was writing chiefly of mental prayer which she described as secret converse with Him Who we know loves us. Since according to authorities on the interior life distractions put an end to mental prayer—that ceasing when the attention ceases—, Saint Teresa and Saint Francis de Sales and the author of *The Imitation of Christ* and other holy advocates of this kind of prayer, have treated of the difficulty. Saint Teresa insisted, "it is of great importance that the soul should not

be dragged, as they say, but carried gently, that it may make greater progress—," and she advised works of charity and spiritual reading, conversation and walks in the fields for those beset by distractions, not to excuse them from prayer, but that they might meditate better when refreshed.

Gentle, reasonable Saint Francis de Sales culled much of sensible Saint Teresa's wisdom; he quoted her frequently, and probably leaned much on her experience when dealing with troubled souls. It is likely that he was not the prey to distractions that she was; you remember, perhaps, the lines in one of his first letters to Madame de Chantal: "God has been good to me in that from the moment I turn to the altar to celebrate Holy Mass, I have no distractions; but, for some time, I have





always thought of you then, not in a way to distract me, but to attach me more to God; I do not know what He wishes me to understand thereby."

He soon understood, of course, that he was to be God's helper in making Madame de Chantal a saint—and it was for her and others of his spiritual children that he prepared *The Introduction to a Devout Life* and his *Treatise on the Love of God*. Perhaps it was because he was so little disturbed by distractions himself that he mentioned spiritual dryness in these works oftener than wandering thoughts, but, since it is during dryness that distractions are so painful to the rest of us, his words are relevant.

Charmingly characteristic of him who so loved the out-of-doors are the nature similes with which St. Francis de Sales illustrated his instructions on prayer; in speaking of spiritual exercises performed without relish, for instance, he referred to the honey bees who accomplish most when they are not seeking sweet flowers in the fields; and he pursued the subject with another allusion to nature, "Our actions are like roses which, when fresh, have more beauty, yet, when dry, have more strength and sweetness." And he reminded his penitents that Saint Angela of Foligno was wont to maintain that the prayer which is most acceptable to God is that which we make by force and constraint.

A contemporary of Saint Francis de Sales, the Carmelite Brother Lawrence, said of himself that at first his prayer consisted wholly in resisting distractions and in falling into them again! Anybody who has fought the battle only to meet with defeat knows how hard that prayer was, but the suffering that the imagination causes is possibly an indication that all is not wrong.

In this regard we have but to think of Saint Catherine of Siena; there is something infinitely touching in the description of her interior struggle when she cried out, "O Lord, where wast Thou when my heart was tormented?" and received the assurance that God was with her, and, as a proof of the fact, the reminder that the temptation had given her pain.

In her *Autobiography* Saint Teresa tells how once, when she was fright-

fully distracted, she began to envy those who dwelt in desert places, and then realized that they were not exempt from the difficulty, but rather more tempted than she. "Have patience," she heard, "while life lasts, it cannot be helped."

This inevitability is stressed again and again in *The Imitation of Christ*, for the practical author of that little book was a man of prayer. "Let not, therefore, strange phantasies of whatever kind suggested trouble thee. Keep thy resolution firm, and thy intention upright towards God." He asserts, "I never



found anyone so religious and devout as not sometimes to experience a withdrawal of grace and a diminution of fervor," and he tells us that the Psalmist called out, "Thou hast turned away Thy face from me, and I became troubled." The author of *The Imitation of Christ* was acutely conscious of the pain caused by distractions, and he measured progress in the spiritual life not by having the grace of consolation "but in bearing with the withdrawal of it with humility, self-abnegation and patience, so as not then to grow remiss in the exercise of prayer . . ."

The author of *The Imitation of Christ* discourses eloquently on the happiness of the soul that has the strength and grace to overcome distractions in prayer:

"Happy is the soul which heareth the Lord speaking within her, and receiveth from His mouth the word of comfort.

"Happy ears which receive the breathings of the divine whisper, and take no notice of the whisperings of this world.

"Happy ears indeed which hearken not to the voice that sounded without, but to the Truth itself.

"Happy eyes which are shut to outward things, but intent on things eternal.

"Happy they who rejoice to be wholly intent on God, and who shake off every worldly impediment.

"Consider these things, O my soul, and close up the doors of thy sensual desires; that thou mayst hear what the Lord thy God speaketh within thee."

Humility, gentleness with ourselves and the will to pray—such are counseled by the great spiritual masters, and with their vast knowledge of human nature they have understood how tremendous is the will power of the average man or woman. Certain ones of them, notably Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Ignatius Loyola, have insisted that the mind must be thoroughly prepared for prayer. Both of these and Saint Philip Neri believed that it was very helpful to repeat the *Our Father* slowly, meditating briefly on each section, and, if distractions came, proceeding to the next. As if to prove the wisdom of their advice, we find little Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, so generally the victim of dryness and drowsiness, declaring how useful the habit had been to her; it is pleasant to discover the results of the learned saints' counsel in the life of a modern saint.

The Church, foreseeing our tendency to distractions, provides us with petitions against them. There is, for example, in the prayer that is said before Divine Office a request that our minds be cleansed from wandering thoughts; and the Collect for the nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost reads, "Almighty and merciful God, graciously keep us from all harm, that we, being set free both in mind and body, may with ready minds pursue what is Thine."

Again and again throughout the liturgy, occur prayers in which that petition to pursue what is God's with a ready mind is implicit; especially in the Collects of Whitsun Week do we find it, and in the glorious *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, the Sequence of Pentecost. And when we read the Psalms and the Epistles of Saint Paul (who prayed that his followers be strengthened by the Spirit with might unto the inward man) we use the very words of holy men who knew what it is to struggle to pray.

Surely, those of us tempted to think that we have a corner on distractions see our mistake when we find ourselves in such company.

# Having Christ On One's Hands

By DAMIAN REID, C.P.

**P**ILATE is the man who became notorious for thinking that he could square a crime by merely washing his hands. Whether deep in his own conscience and out of whatever fund of common sense he possessed, he really believed that calling for water and dramatically protesting his innocence would do anything substantial to justify his act, we do not know. It is not likely, however; for conscience has too pitiless an eye and cannot be bluffed by noise or histrionics. Pilate might wash his hands a thousand times but the abolutions could not revoke the deed that he had already sent into history. A guiltless Man was on His way to the gallows. Pilate had sent Him there. Pilate could stop Him. But Pilate washed his hands.

Pilate was possibly not enough of a fool to entertain the idea of successfully blinding his own conscience. He may have been thinking only of the crowd and of throwing dust in their eyes. A mob is such a susceptible and gullible organization. Ceremony counts a great deal with it. A shout or a gesture can steer its sentiment. The light, uncritical folk in it will grasp a catchword, and, out of sheer irresponsible ebullience, will carry away much stronger spirits. It may have been that Pilate was counting on something like this. He had been weak and in the wrong. He felt that he had cheapened himself. But he hoped that he could retreat with some dignity. Even though he would have to live and sleep with a debased conscience, the mob need know nothing about that. They were not near enough to Pilate's conscience to know its sordidness as well as he did. Some lofty gesture on his part might intensify whatever illusion they still entertained to his credit. So he called for water, and somberly washed his hands, and read to them the futile lesson of the act: "I am innocent of the blood of this just Man. Look

you to it."  
Men have been looking to it ever since. And what-

ever success his strategy may have had in the immediate circumstances has been reversed completely down the centuries. Posterity has not been hypnotized into thinking that Pilate was a great man or even an honest man in his encounter with Christ. Even Herod looks noble by comparison. Herod was a dilettante, and his postures and conduct, while not sober enough for a king, nevertheless belonged to the litany of faults that kings may commit. But Herod did not crawl. And Pilate did crawl. Herod dismissed Our Lord with a laugh. But Pilate was afraid to dismiss Him at all. That was his crime.

What was the affair of Christ insofar as it concerned Pilate?

It was somewhat different from what it had been with the Sanhedrin. When the Sanhedrin brought Jesus to trial before themselves, the chief purpose of their indictment was to fasten on Him a crime that would weigh with their own people. They could not afford to railroad Christ to the cross for no other reason than that He had incurred their spite. He had too large and enthusiastic a following for that. Whatever the Sanhedrin did must be done with some semblance of dignity; and the more closely the accusation touched their own jurisdiction and the sanctity of Jewish law the better it would serve. Consequently, their efforts and their questions were all shaped to involve Our Lord on a point of religious doctrine or practice. Eventually they had manufactured a conviction for blasphemy.

But that technique would not go with Pilate. He had very little respect for Jewish law; and, it seems, just as little respect for the Sanhedrin. So that, while they had determined that Jesus was worthy of death because He blasphemed, they had to convince Pilate that He was worthy of death for a totally different reason. Therefore, they accused

Him to Pilate of a strictly political crime. They said that He was undermining the civic authority of Rome. They specified His acts of sedition as forbidding to give tribute to Caesar and of claiming to be a king. These were both shameless lies. Christ had certainly protected any right that Caesar had to income from taxation. He had declared that to them face to face when they had asked Him a question which they considered would either implicate Him with Caesar who gathered the taxes or with the people who were galled at having to pay taxes. He said on that occasion: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." And while Christ had claimed to be a king, they knew His meaning clearly enough to see that they were most dishonestly representing Him to Pilate. They condemned Him of blasphemy in their own court because they knew that His claim to kingship did not have a political significance. But they accused Him to Pilate as if the statement had nothing but a political significance.

Pilate appears not to have taken them seriously; for his interrogation of Our Redeemer was of the most casual kind. He seems to have been more concerned with gratifying his own curiosity than with instituting a serious trial. When Christ told him that the kingdom He had spoken of was not of this world, the trial was ended and Christ was proved innocent.

It is reported that Pilate reiterated that verdict four times. He could find no reason for condemning Jesus. Now, Pilate may have covered this point with such insistence to avoid any half-promise that would compromise himself with the crowd and prevent him from giving a finally decisive verdict in Our Lord's favor. Anything that would postpone the issue might give sentiment a chance to begin running in the opposite direction. But if those clear assertions of Christ's innocence had any effect at the

***Pilate Discovered That Reproaches of Conscience Cannot Be Brushed Aside By Defensive Words or Symbolic Gestures***



*Drawing on wood made especially for THE SIGN by Mario Barberis, Rome, Italy*

*And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, taking water washed his hands before the people, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it"*



time in saving him from compromise, they have since then compromised the name and integrity of Pilate with as black a smirch as attaches to any man. For, after that, there was only one honest course left open to him. He should have released Christ and let the crowd roar as loudly as it pleased. The echoes of their disappointment might have reached the ear of Caesar; but the record would have been clean; and that would have been as good for Caesar as it would have been for Pilate.

But Pilate fell into the pit that he had dug himself. And he fell into it after he had called the world to witness that it was there. Pilate had protested that he could not as an honest man go along with the people and condemn Jesus just to suit their whim. He put the matter squarely on an ethical consideration, and said that from that point of view there was only one way out. Then he took another way out. He did condemn Our Lord to suit their whim.

If he had been wise, Pilate would have let it go at that. It would not have been the first case of inconsistency that had developed in human society; and it would not be the last. But he was rash enough to go on and dramatize his disgrace. He made it visible to the eye, and pointed it up with symbol and pantomime. He did a peerless job in making his infamy unforgettable. He gave the sanction that was necessary to legalize the death of Christ; then called for a basin of water, washed his hands in it, and pretended that the execution of Christ was none of his doing.

Our Lord stood there beside him, looking at him. We can wonder whether Pilate dared to look at Christ. He was putting on a pitiable show for the people's benefit; but how he must have flinched under the gaze of the Man he was sending to the gallows. After an exhibition of shameful weakness, he was trying to re-establish his dignity with the people; but he could only feel that this grand gesture of his was sending him down in the estimation of Jesus. For how could he hope that Christ, as He hung on the cross and rehearsed this performance in His mind, would summon up a grain of admiration for the Roman governor who did not want to condemn Him because it was unjust; but who did

condemn Him because he was afraid.

This act of washing his hands and calling himself innocent was the really absurd thing among the many weak and unreasonable things Pilate did with reference to the condemnation of Jesus Christ. Pilate was pretending that he was guileless. He did something which he would like to think stopped the game of moral responsibility for him long enough to delete this bothersome affair of having passed judgment on Christ. He would have liked it better if Our Lord had not been brought to him in the first place. Then there would never have been the problem of judging Him, with the attendant likelihood that before the business was finished, he would have to tread on someone's toes both to their discomfort and his own. But he did pass judgment on Christ, and after guiltily having done that, he performed a ceremony which if it meant anything to him, was like turning back time leaving Our Lord a victim but erasing the name of Pilate from all implication in the deed.

IT WOULD be difficult to find in Christian history a character who fought against fact and tried to change the moral immutables in the open and blatant manner in which Pilate did in this instance. But that does not say that such a thing cannot happen and does not happen frequently in a less blatant and open way. In fact it is not the history of most sin? Sin is not ordinarily the result of a personal grievance against God. A man does not single out God for an affront and then invent a method of carrying it through. At least, he does not do that unless he is a Marxist. He sins rather as a matter of convenience. It is too bad that the law of God is in the way. It is too bad that God is in any way involved. And God must clearly understand and be duly impressed with the fact that there is no insult intended.

The psychology of the ordinary sinner is diversified only by the divine law which his sin happens to fall under. Graft, for instance, is an outlawed act. But it is such an easy means to the desirable goal of personal security; and while a man would like to take graft and at the same time remain a friend of God, he will accept the graft and implicitly protest to God that he did not do it

for the purpose of being unfriendly with Him. Romance is also protected and limited by the divine canons; and while it is common knowledge that these canons are frequently transgressed, it is almost certain that they are rarely transgressed simply to flout God. The duties of religion do not so severely tax the deeper human emotions; but even here a man will often stand God up and expect Him to be a good sport as Pilate expected Christ to be a good sport when he sent Him to Calvary and protested that somehow it was not his doing.

If this is not the spirit in which most sin is done, it is at least the spirit in which much sin is done. Whatever comfort a person finds in this frame of mind is as foolish and fallacious as the comfort which Pilate found in washing his hands and protesting himself innocent. It is simply an effort to change the immutable in the way Pilate did. Pilate did not want Christ to suffer. But he condemned Him to suffer. A sinner does not want to make God angry. But he provokes Him. Pilate thereby absolved himself of guilt. The sinner thereby absolves himself of malice.

For the fact that Pilate has immortalized this particular twist of psychology with reference to responsibility, he typifies every sinner who endeavors to justify his guilt. In this respect he is entirely different from Judas. From what we can discover, Judas coldly borrowed the opportunity to do evil; and there is no evidence that he took the trouble either before or after his treachery to think of self-justification. But Pilate was backed into a corner. What he did he did reluctantly. And so, he invented a middle course. Where Judas wanted money and also wanted to sell Christ for the money, Pilate wanted peace and political security but was unwilling to punish innocence to pay for it. While Judas conceded the full extent of his guilt, Pilate thought that there was a special virtue in the fact that though he committed a crime, he did it reluctantly. But as with all sin—the very fact that he so ritualistically washed his hands to indicate that the crime was not on his conscience, proved that the crime was very much on his conscience. He could not separate his sentence from Christ's death, and he could not separate the fact of his sin from the malice of it.



*Drawings by Robert Allaway*

# Maternity Guilds

By EDGAR SCHMIEDELER, O.S.B.

THERE has been over the past few years a decidedly encouraging growth of interest in the organized promotion of activities in behalf of the Catholic family. This has undoubtedly been the result of programs fostered by a great number of different organizations, but notably the Catholic Conference on Family Life. For more than five years now this national group has been working energetically to advance the cause of the Catholic family by a rejuvenation of interest in its behalf in every possible way.

One of the more recent, and at the same time more practical ways in which this interest in the family has shown itself is in the establishment of Maternity Guilds. Now operating in several parishes for a number of years, these guilds have by this time fully proved their usefulness; their timeliness and their practicality. This fact, coupled with their now generally recognized need, should combine to encourage their speedy development on a nationwide scale. It is in the hope of giving some impetus to just such a development that this brief description of the Guild—of its purposes, its organization, its methods of operation—is offered to the readers of THE SIGN.

A Maternity Guild might broadly be defined as a group of individuals who provide a fund for the purpose of defraying the expenses incidental to childbirth on the part of any of its members. It is no secret that

many today are unable to procure competent care at the time of confinement, or that they can do so only with great difficulty or at an extraordinary sacrifice. The president of a physician's guild stated several years ago that the average cost of 90% of the confinement cases in a large city, exclusive of charity cases, was \$200. Needless to add, there are many who can ill afford to pay such a sum every time an additional child comes into the home.

The poor are suitably provided for in this regard. People of means can meet the expenses involved in the hospitalization of maternity cases. But there is the large group between these two extremes, the great mass of people in moderate circumstances. These feel that they have a right to the best of modern care. Furthermore, they wish to pay their way. They do not care to be humiliated by being classed as paupers or charity cases. Nevertheless there is a definite limit to their pocketbooks. The question is how this large class is to be served. How are its mothers to be assured adequate maternity care without pauperization?

It is first and foremost this large middle-class group that the Maternity Guild has in mind. By means of a fund obtained from the Guild members, hospital care is provided for expectant mothers who are members of a particular unit. The Guild, working in conjunction with local Catholic physicians and hospitals, secures this care for a reasonable re-

muneration, commonly amounting to approximately \$50. A part of this sum is paid by the individual who gets the benefit of the care. The service, it is understood, is rendered the expectant members as paying members of the Guild and not on the basis of charity or poor relief. It is in fact the ambition of the average Guild to build up a fund sufficiently large to enable it to provide care also for at least a number of exceptional cases—people who are members of the parish wherein a Guild is established but who are not in a position to contribute anything, or at any rate not the usual amount, to the Guild.

The Guild's fund, out of which the fees for physician and hospital are cared for, is built up through contributions from various sources. Usually the main source of revenue is that group of members known as *family members*—husbands and wives of the Parish who may expect to benefit directly from membership in the Guild. In some Guild units these members pay a fixed monthly or annual dues. In others they pay a definite sum at the time they seek aid of the Guild. Still other contributors are parishioners of moderate means, who, while they do not expect to derive any benefits from membership, nevertheless willingly give an alms at regular intervals for the furtherance of this worthy cause. Occasionally, too, people of considerable means, motivated by Christian charity, contribute substantial sums to the fund.

The first Guild to be organized in this country was that of St. Joseph's Parish, San Antonio, Texas. It was really not a full-fledged Guild, its members largely confining their activities to making layettes and giving them to the poor of the parish. The second Guild, founded shortly afterwards, is in the large St. Anthony's Parish, Milwaukee. In March,

1934, a third unit was established in St. Francis de Sales Parish, St. Louis. Since the latter's foundation at least one unit has been organized in each of the following centers: Minneapolis, Minnesota; St. Cloud, Minnesota; Indianapolis, Indiana; Quincy, Illinois; Rochester, New York; Elmira, New York; New York City; Munhall, Pennsylvania; Williamsport, Pennsylvania; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Baltimore, Maryland, and Lima, Ohio. There is also a unit, now several years old, in far off Johannesburg, Africa.

It should help to clarify the Guild idea further to look more closely into the organization and operation of at least one of the aforementioned units. The one that is perhaps most fittingly singled out for consideration is the St. Francis de Sales Parish Guild at St. Louis, Missouri. It has not only handled an exceptionally large number of maternity cases during the short period of its existence, but has also in every way operated successfully.

The St. Francis de Sales Guild is simplicity itself. There are but two officers, a chairman and a secretary. Application for Maternity Guild services, and payment for services and donations to support the cause, are made to either of these officers. The aim of the unit is simply stated as being "to assist expectant mothers of the Christian Mothers' Society to defray hospital and doctor's fees incident to confinement." Beneficiaries of the Guild, therefore, must be members of this Society. Furthermore, it is required that they have been members at least six months, and are otherwise in good standing. Each is expected to pay into the Guild fund \$25 when she makes application for its services.

When the requirements of the Guild have been complied with, the applicant is given a card introducing her to a physician who has agreed to co-operate with the Guild. This entitles the member to ordinary pre-natal, natal and post-natal care. Should her case require other than ordinary care, such as an operation, the patient must pay the physician for such services. A second card is given the applicant, introducing her to the Sisters of a co-operating Catholic hospital. This card entitles her to ten days ordinary care in a ward in a hospital. Should extra charges become necessary the

patient must take care of these, payment being made through the Guild.

Regarding fees to physician and hospital the official literature of the Guild states: "We have an arrangement with doctors and hospitals. . . . We pay \$25.00 to the hospital and the doctor receives \$20.00, this being \$20.00 over the amount we receive. Our plan does not provide private rooms or special nurses. Those desiring this pay their own bills. On the other hand, should one of our



members lack the means to pay even the \$25.00 the case is referred to His Excellency (Auxiliary Bishop Christian Winkelman, Pastor) who then makes special arrangements with the hospital and one of our doctors who takes such cases gratis."

The work of the Guild under consideration is financed through fees, donations, interest from the Christian Mothers' investment fund and socials. As has already been indicated, the applicant for the Guild services is expected to pay \$25 into the organization's fund. This may be done on a monthly installment plan, if the party so desires.

The development of the St. Francis de Sales Guild itself and of its work has in every way been satisfactory. In spite of the trying times during which it began to operate, it has been marked by continual growth and progress. In its infancy but two doctors and one hospital co-operated with it. Today thirty doctors and all the Catholic hospitals of the city work with it. One hundred and eighty-seven cases have been handled under its surveillance.

Considered from the viewpoint of our serious depopulation threat there is very real need for multiplying these Guilds. There is many a par-

ish today that is no longer reproducing itself. Indeed, even a considerable number of dioceses are showing sharp declines in the ranks of the younger generation.

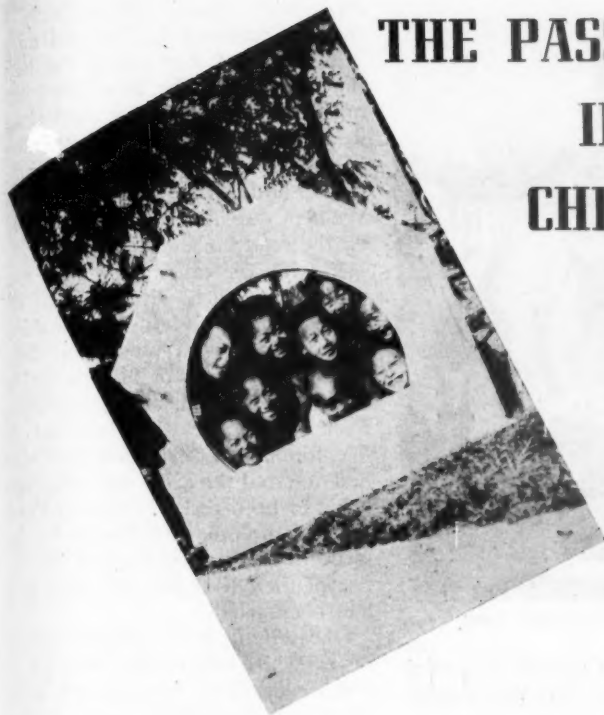
Not only can it be said that there is need for these Guilds today, but also that they are wholly in harmony with the ideas expressed in the late Holy Father's encyclical on Christian Marriage. In this noted document Pope Pius XI called attention to the fact that the perfect observance of God's commands and conjugal integrity encounter difficulties by reason of the fact that man and wife today are often in straitened circumstances. In this situation, he says, "it is patent to all to what extent married people may lose heart, and how home life and the observance of God's commands are rendered difficult for them." But His Holiness does not rest satisfied with merely pointing to the difficulty. He urges that due provision be made for meeting it; and among the things which he himself specifies are "private or public guilds."

In view of the unquestioned need for these guilds and in view of their inherent excellence and practicality and their approval by such high authority, it need not be argued that to promote their further and speedy growth is to do a most commendable work. Indeed, all these considerations should combine to urge all who truly have the welfare of the family at heart to do so to the utmost of their power. It is no longer sufficient to write and speak about the needs of the family. It is necessary to do something about them. The Maternity Guild offers a practical means to this end.

It would be better still, however, if Maternity Guilds be founded on the basis of the *Association of the Holy Family*. Not only would this highly indulged organization, founded and urged upon the universal Church by Pope Leo XIII, serve most fittingly as a basis for the Guild and its work, but it would also appropriately serve as a basis for a host of other activities—study clubs on the family and a great number of religious devotions—particularly suitable to the home. It would help immeasurably to get our family life back again upon the real foundation of all true home life, religion. It would again make Christ the head of the Catholic home.



# THE PASSIONISTS IN CHINA



## Over the Chopsticks

By MICHAEL A. CAMPBELL, C.P.

A NUMBER of the Fathers were sitting about the table listening to Father Liu speak of the customs of China. Father Liu is the first native priest to visit America on a special mission in behalf of the native clergy of China. As Father discoursed in excellent English on the ways of the Chinese, one of the listeners asked him how he liked American food.

Father replied that he found American food served cold; even the hot dishes seemed to him quite cold. There is so much time lost between preparing dishes in the kitchen and serving them at the table that the food has plenty of opportunity to cool off. And then he said that we drink cold water with our meals, cold milk, and eat ice cream.

Father said when he ate his meals in China they were boiling hot. And he meant boiling, for he went on to explain that the food was served while cooking on a little brick stove placed in the center of the table.

There is one thing that the Chinese know and that is their mushrooms.

Even the youngsters can tell them from toadstools. They never seem to have the slightest doubt as to the correctness of their knowledge. One day while coming home from swimming with the boys of Yungshun, we passed a fallen tree on which was growing some sort of fungus. I noticed it but thought it was some useless growth. "Can we pick those 'ears'?" they asked. "They are good to eat." Then it was that I learned that they were some type of mushroom.

The seminarians at Yüanling like to run over the hills after a rainy season for they know a couple of good spots in the mountains where mushrooms grow. After that half day they always have a feast of the mushrooms they picked themselves. When in season mushrooms are very plentiful in our Vicariate. The country folk bring hand-baskets filled with them into the market. The quantity of mushrooms for which you would pay \$2.00 to \$3.00 American money over here, cost us from 20 to 30 cents

in Chinese money in Hunan.

The Chinese save orange peels, dry them, and make wine from them. They also add them to the fire with which they smoke hams. This gives the ham a distinct flavor.

In season, corn is very popular on the streets of Yüanling. We see people walking down the street eating an ear of corn. It seems to have the same place in their life as an ice cream cone has in the life of an American. The corn is not very sweet but more like our cow corn variety, yellow and somewhat tough.

In Hunan the Chinese eat peas as we eat string beans; pod and all. They let the peas grow until the pea begins to form in the pod and then they pick them. They are very tender, and are served as greens.

We were at Wusu and the cook wanted some extra money for something that I could not make out, never having heard the Chinese word before. He said they used it in Yüanling, so I gave him the 20 or 30 cents. That afternoon he came in with a

big piece of bark from some tree. It was about four feet long.

He said, "Here it is." Still I was in the dark.

"Taste it." I did.

"Cinnamon" I said.

He smiled and nodded. "Yes, ch'i-ni-mon." He knew that English word. Cinnamon grows in Wusu.

While eating at the Lichiwan Mission Station, no matter how many subjects of conversation I brought up none of them received a very enthusiastic reception. At first I could not understand this seeming coldness on the part of the catechist and his family. Later on however I learned that these country folk do not like to talk during meals but give all their attention to the work before them.

#### ON BEING POLITE

FATHERS MARCELLUS, C.P., and Reginald, C.P., had arrived in the Missions only a few weeks previous and had just begun to study the language. It would be impossible to reach perfection in Chinese in such a short time. Yet Chinese politeness demands that a native compliment a foreigner upon the excellency of his Chinese as soon as he utters the first few words.

On this particular occasion we had been discussing this custom while sailing down stream in a sampan. We were accompanied by the seminarians and Mr. Joseph Wang, one of their teachers. Fr. Marcellus took advantage of the occasion and began to practice his Chinese on one of the boys. Sure enough before Father had even finished the first sentence Joseph spoke up and said: "My but you speak Chinese well, Father."

He just couldn't resist it! In fact he would have done violence to himself not to have said it. Of course one cannot believe this compliment as the truth. It is just politeness; an encouraging remark.

#### PRAYERS FOR DEPARTED

WHEN one of our Christians dies it is the custom to say three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys at the end of morning and night prayers in all the churches of the Vicariate for three consecutive days. If a priest or Sister dies these prayers are said for a month. If His Excellency the Bishop dies they are said for three months. When the Holy Father dies the prayers are said for



*Shopping on the Wusu Road*

six months. Thus are the departed souls remembered in the public prayers of the Vicariate.

#### A SICK CALL

EARLY one afternoon towards the end of the school year Very Rev. Father Rector of the Seminary came into my room and said: "A sick call just came in from Wusu. Would you like to go? You can take two of the seminarians with you. Leave as soon as you can get ready; stay up there overnight; say Holy Mass the next morning and then ride back in a sampan."

Wusu being a ten-mile walk up the North River, I picked the two best hikers among the seminarians, Anthony and Patrick. These were the first two boys to arrive at Yüanling on our hike from Wuki, a distance of 47 miles. Maybe they weren't happy when I told them of the trip! No classes for them during the next twenty-four hours, with a couple of good swims and a boat ride in the meantime. Of course ten miles meant nothing to them.

As soon as they got the word they dashed upstairs, got their things together and within a few minutes we were on the road. Just as we were about to pass out the West Gate we met a woman carrying a very sick child in a basket on her back. We baptized the child and continued on.

At the three-mile mark we came upon a large stone placed right in the middle of the road. It was cov-

ered with blood. Immediately I thought someone had offered up a sacrifice there. On asking the boys the meaning of the blood they had nothing to say. As we walked along we noticed drops of blood every few paces. Then the drops became farther and farther apart, yet fresher. We kept watching the drops of blood on the road for a whole mile.

Finally we caught up with two young men each with his shirt off placed against his left ear. The shirts were stained with blood and there were wide streaks of blood running down the left side of their trousers. Each man's left ear had been cut off. We found out that these two men had deserted the army some time ago but had been recently captured and suffered the due punishment for desertion. They were marked for the rest of their lives for the crime they had committed.

On arriving at the Wusu Mission the catechist told us Mrs. Wang had sent for us, so we immediately went over to see her. She was more frightened than sick. The summer weather had weakened her but otherwise she was all right. When her husband and I were alone he said to me: "I am glad you came, Father; you know my wife gets much consolation from her religion. When she told me she was going to become a Christian I said she could, but I also told her she must practice her new religion and live up to all its requirements. She has done this, Father. Both of our boys have been baptized and go to the Mission School. I am very happy, and hope to become a Christian myself some day." May the dear Lord give Mr. Wang the gift of Faith. He is a very rare type of pagan—so God-fearing, sincere, and upright.

#### QUEST FOR BEAUTY

FLOWERS in China are like the people: we find them everywhere. No matter how small the backyard, no matter how cluttered up it might be, there will always be a little touch of beauty therein. Even a rubbish heap will be used as a pedestal for a pot of beautiful chrysanthemums, thus becoming a little Hanging Garden of Babylon.

Stephen, one of the Mission boys, thought more of his little garden of chrysanthemums and dahlias than he did of his home. Of course his home was nothing to brag about; a little shack built up against the garden

wall with room in it for only two things, his bed and bureau. On entering the shack one could hardly turn around, it was so cramped.

When I visited Stephen he would not invite me in to sit down but he would meet me at the gate and immediately escort me to his little garden and go into an ecstasy over some new blossom of that day. His heart was in his garden and not in his home.

And down on River Street in Yüanling where the firecracker makers ply their trade there was another bright spot (a treat for sore eyes), a large pot of red dahlias at one end of the counter plumb against the sidewalk.

There is more poetry in the names of Chinese schools than we find in the names of our American schools. For example, the following bear the beautiful titles: "Facing the Sun"; "Great Wisdom"; "Pure Vitruve."

In country schools the boys and girls like to keep a small vase of flowers on their desk. Really it isn't a vase; just an old bottle or glass.

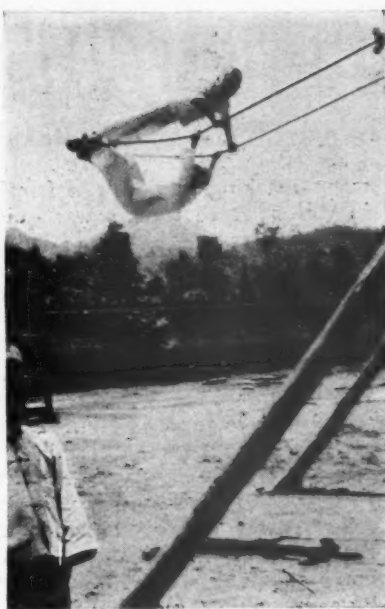
#### SUPERSTITIONS

THE officials in one town were so superstitious that after they declared a fast for rain and got it, they would not allow the townsfolk to use an umbrella in the rain lest offense be given to the rain god.

Every year at the beginning of the boat-racing season, when the Chinese launch the dragon boats, each crew performs a pagan superstitious ceremony over its own boat before they put it into the water.

The ceremony consists of this: a rooster is killed on the bank of the river and his blood is poured over the prow of the boat. Meanwhile the drummer drums and the man with the cymbals makes an ungodly din. The other members of the crew stand by at attention with their paddles raised aloft. When all is over the dragon boat is launched.

In our Vicariate there are two ordinary ways of making an offering of a rooster to an idol. The first is this: the rooster is killed in such a way that he remains intact. Then he is plucked and cooked. After this a few of the tail feathers are restored to their rightful place. Finally he is taken to the temple to be offered to the idol. The second way: the rooster is taken to the temple alive—there killed before the idol so that the



*Enjoying the school yard swing*

rooster's blood runs out upon the ground; it is afterwards taken home and cooked.

In Yungshun the natives say that a dog lying on the ground unconscious will come to consciousness again from the earth; whereas, if the dog is lying on a stone he will die, as there is no breath coming forth from stone.

I do not know just how sensitive animals may be to the earth but I always noticed while riding Nancy, the Yungshun mule, that whenever she came to a loose stone along the mountain roads of the north country she would first droop her head, smell all around the stone and then deliberately avoid stepping on it. There must have been some sort of breath coming out from under the loose stones for Nancy could smell it every time.

#### MEDICAL NOTES

"How did you get that scratch on the back of your hand, Father?" I asked. We were sitting at the dinner table in Yüanling.

"O, the kitty did it," Father replied.

"Father, I'll bet that six months from now you will be able to notice the scar from that scratch."

"Is that right?"

When the six months had passed we did remark to each other how noticeable the scar was. After spending a few summers in Hunan one's blood becomes thinned out consider-

ably and the slow healing process of cuts and scratches makes this very apparent.

Sometimes patients come to the dispensary complaining that their legs feel as cold as ice on the inside. The first thing that suggests itself to our minds is this, that they are opium smokers, for one of the effects of this evil habit is that it seems to dry up the very life stream of its addict.

#### BALANCING THE BUDGET

THREE or four of the Fathers were returning to the Missions from Hankow. At Changteh we picked up Andrew Tsen, our comprador, and continued on to Taouen. Here we had to make some purchases for the ten days sail up river. Among the things to be purchased was a basket, about the size of a clothes basket, in which to keep the cooking utensils. Andrew was to do all the buying.

We took a walk down the street until we reached a basket-maker's shop. Hanging from the rafters was a basket, just the kind we wanted. Andrew pointed it out to the owner and asked how much he wanted for it. "One dollar," he replied, as he reached up to get it for us.

"I'll give you 20¢ for it," said Andrew. What a comedown in price! Then I thought to myself that Andrew didn't mean to give only that little bit but was just trying to talk the price down by beginning very low. The owner wouldn't listen to "20¢" so our comprador, with a disdainful laugh walked away, we following after.

While Andrew was buying things at other stores I kept thinking to myself that he would in the end perhaps give 50¢ for the basket, and that the "20¢" was just a little act of his. You can imagine my surprise when he returned to the basket maker's and got that basket for exactly 20¢. Truly there was a little dicker-ing on this occasion but Andrew had all the arguments.

"The basket is all covered with dust. That thing must have been hanging up there for a number of years without making a cent. Why not get something for it now before the worms eat it up?" Did Andrew know his business and the psychology of his countrymen? Between 30 and 40 years of experience in all sorts of buying and selling had made Andrew an expert comprador.



# Sister Theresa Joseph Lung

By QUENTIN OLWELL, C.P.

ON A NICE sunny day in August, 1925, a group of pagan high school girls, led by curiosity, visited the Catholic Mission, in charge of the Passionist Fathers, at Yuanchow (now called Chihkiang) in the Province of Hunan, China. A former companion of theirs who had become a Catholic met them. After showing them the church and other buildings she brought them to see the missionary of the place, Father Timothy McDermott, C.P. The writer was then on a visit to Yuanchow from his own Mission twenty some miles away, and had the pleasure of meeting the group of young ladies.

They were a normal group of girls, ranging from fifteen to nineteen years of age. If anything, they were a bit more modern or sophisticated than the American high school girl of that time. They made themselves at home in the visiting room where the priests received them; and having done so pulled out their cigarettes and without a "by your leave" proceeded to light up and smoke. Being pagans they were quite curious about these white men and their strange religion. Numerous were the questions they plied and interestedly did they receive the answers. After a proper lapse of time for such a visit (about the space of a cigarette smoke and the imbibing of a cup of tea) they left.

Their former companion, already a Christian, enlightened us on a few of the girls. Especially interested were we in one who, while more forward and more sophisticated than the others, really left no bad impression but rather seemed to stand out because of a quality of courage.

We learned that she was in a small way a sort of leader in her little group. The Kuomintang, the Chinese People's Party, was something quite new and recent that far in the interior of China. We learned that this girl—one of the Lung family, a large and prominent family of the city—was so interested in the party, which stood for the re-education of the masses of the Chinese people, that she was doing some

street speaking. This for a female in China, at that time, was quite revolutionary.

We also learned that in her talks she did not hesitate to tell about the various injuries and insults her country suffered from the foreigners. Very interesting and informative was the visit of this little group of high school girls to the Catholic Mission at Yuanchow in August, 1925.

On another sunny day in August, 1939, it was my pleasure to visit another group of young ladies at Baden, Pennsylvania, the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Pittsburgh. The occasion was the ceremonies consequent upon the final Profession of this group as Sisters of St. Joseph. These young ladies had made the supreme offer of themselves to God; they had gone through their years as novices and the three years of temporary vows, and were now before their ecclesiastical superior and with his approbation, which approval means God's approval, sacrificing themselves perpetually to the love and service of God through the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Again in this group one young lady stood out—not that she was more pious or more religious appearing than the others—but because of her color. She was a Chinese tak-

ing her perpetual vows with a group of American girls.

Yes, as the reader has no doubt concluded, the girl who stood out in the high school group of August, 1925, and the girl who stood out in the August, 1939, group, is one and the same person—Theresa Lung—now known as Sister Theresa Joseph.

With her sense of sincerity and her spirit of courage, Theresa looked deeper and further into the strange religion, of which she first learned in her home town fourteen years ago. After going through various vicissitudes because of pagan relatives, friends and companions with an unclear patriotic sense, Theresa entered the Catholic Church. Few can realize what true courage and real bravery it entailed to take the step she did. But the rewards were not long in coming. Her parents were dead. According to Chinese custom, her brothers were her guardians.

It was not long before Theresa had her two older brothers and one younger brother interested in the Catholic Faith. Imagine, if you can, her joy when the whole family had finally finished their course of study and had been baptized! In all, some ten souls received Baptism, all led by courageous Theresa.

Being baptized a Catholic, Theresa now gave all her energies to the work of the Church in her home town. She was soon teaching in the little Catholic school. Finally the Sisters came to Yuanchow. Theresa's joy in their coming knew no bounds. And to those who followed her history it was no surprise when she determined to give herself fully and wholly to the Church by becoming a Sister. After a trial period in China, living with the Sisters of St. Joseph, Theresa was sent to the community's motherhouse at Baden, Pennsylvania, to make her novitiate and temporary vows, and at the same time to work and study for her college diploma which she hopes to get next year. Then she will return to her native city to carry on the great work which her courageous spirit will so well enable her to do. Her vocation, we hope, will inspire others.



Sister Theresa Lung

# Part of a Dream Fulfilled

By SISTER ETHELBERTA



*Sister Catherine Gabriel*

IN SEPTEMBER, fifteen years ago, five Sisters of Charity left America for their first Mission in China. Up to the present time, eleven Sisters have carried on the work inaugurated by the original group. Now another September departure ceremony sends new missionaries to the East. Sister Catherine Gabriel Whittaker, of North Bergen, N. J., and a graduate of St. Joseph's Hospital, Paterson, N. J.; and Sister Beata Maria Zarillo, of Belleville, N. J., and a graduate of St. Raphael's Hospital, New Haven, Conn., will sail from San Francisco soon.

Both Sisters are registered nurses. The sending of them to China represents a very notable sacrifice from the ranks of the Sisters of Charity in the United States. Yet they go gladly, conscious that they are filling a most urgent need in the mission field. To understand this, the readers of *THE SIGN* must recall the background of the Sisters' medical work in the Chinese missions.

When Sister Finan opened her dispensary in 1925, she had as an office a tiny room, with a packing box as a counter. The patients were few and timid. Hardly a one of them had ever seen a Sister, and their awe was almost equal to their curiosity; usually it was greater than the distress of their pains and aches.

By degrees the natives visited the dispensary. The word spread that

the Sister was kind. Then like a tidal wave came the fatal famine in 1926, literally sweeping its victims to the Sisters' doors. They cared for uncounted numbers. "Home visiting" became a most active part of the dispensary work. The necessity for a larger room and more help became imperative.

The poverty of the Chinese, their ignorance of and indifference to personal hygiene, made them subject to all manner of disease. Each year the dreaded cholera, typhoid fever and bubonic plague took their heavy toll. Sister Finan was appointed by the City to take care of the smallpox vaccinations. Thus by degrees we were able to control that disease. The need of a hospital and more Sister nurses became more apparent each year. Often we heard Sister say: "If I had a place to put my patients, no matter how small it might be, how much good we could do!"

When *THE SIGN* started the Hospital Fund, we spent our recreations planning where, when and how it would be built. Yet it seemed like a dream that would not be fulfilled in our time. Hospital and Sister-nurses in Hunan! When we never knew whether the next week would find us on the run from bandits or Communists! It was too much to hope for.

With the coming of the war, the people down river left their homes, and made for the interior. This brought to the mission a new problem. The Church was asked to take care of as many of the families as possible. We already had the Christian families, who would naturally make for the mission at once. Where were we to put these homeless people? The convent, school and seminary were soon crowded beyond their capacity.

The little possessions the people had were naturally gone by the time they reached Yüanling, a thousand miles in from the coast. Sickness followed the hordes of refugees. As the battle lines drew closer and closer to our district, the Government was forced to move the wounded into



*Sister Beata Maria*

our city. The Protestant missionaries had their hospital, but it was up to us to take care of our own.

In this crisis Bishop O'Gara decided to build a temporary hospital. Perhaps nowhere else in the world would it rate the name of "hospital." It was primitive in its equipment. Yet within its shelter, 100 beds received the sick and maimed bodies of the Chinese. Comfort and medical care from the skilled hands of Sister Finan and her two Chinese nurses gave to the Chinese a new hope. The dispensary had from 250 to 300 cases a day. This meant, for the most part, the first contact of pagans with the Catholic Church.

More Sister-nurses were needed. The Reverend Mother M. Concilio, who has done so much for our missions, appointed Sisters Catherine Gabriel and Beata Maria.

We cannot sufficiently praise the supernatural heroism which marks this venture. There is the apostolic courage of those upon whom rests the responsibility of providing new recruits for the perilous outposts of Christ's Kingdom. There are the brave hearts of parents and relatives, striving to bid a cheerful farewell despite the indescribable pain of impending loneliness. There is the intrepid spirit of the missionary Sisters themselves, looking into a future of hardship and toil, desiring only the spread of God's Kingdom.



Betty Field as Barbara Pearson and Jackie Cooper as Henry Aldrich in the Paramount picture, "What A Life!"

## STAGE AND SCREEN

By JERRY COTTER

INDICATIONS are that the coming months will see a revival of interest in the lighter or so-called "escapist" type of entertainment. According to present plans, special emphasis is to be placed this season on light comedies and musical revues and satires.

This is a direct about-face from the stand taken by producers and playwrights during the past few years. "Realism," or the presentation of a panorama of the seamy side of life, without regard to whether it entertained or repulsed its audience, has been the by-word. It is on this score that the theatre has made its greatest mistake, a mistake which the movies have capitalized on and in true Hollywood fashion, repeated by going too far out on the opposite end of the limb.

We are told that a play like *Tobacco Road*, which from start to finish flounders in the sub-basement of human emotions and vices, should be excused and even lauded on the grounds that it is "Art" and "a true page from life." The countless other plays of objectionable character which are seen during the course of a season are also defended on the grounds that the playwrights are merely holding a mirror to the world and its inhabitants. "If life is like that," we are told, "what can you do?" We do believe that every playgoer is capable of holding his own mirror to life and drawing his own conclusions from what he sees. Playwrights are assumed to be ladies and gentlemen of vivid imagination and great descriptive power and to have the ability to create situations which an audience can enjoy and admire. It takes little imagination and much less talent to assemble many of these "true pages" than the average boy puts into his sixth-grade composition on "My Visit to the Zoo."

If the theatre can, by its efforts, alleviate any of the distress or the wrongs so widespread at the present time, all well and good. To date no proof has been offered that any concrete, beneficial reforms have been accomplished by dramas of social significance and reform. Instead, the path has proven to be a dangerous one to follow and has led to many flagrant violations of the boundaries of good taste, good theatre and good sense.

This swing toward the light and the gay does not necessarily mean that the stage must or should abandon its production efforts to present the best and finest serious dramas of which its technicians are capable. There always has been and always will be a discriminating and thoughtful audience for intelligent, artistic productions which add to the theatre's stature as an art. It does mean that more attention will have to be concentrated this season on the problem of supplying the type of entertainment which will be a satisfactory counteractant to the scare headlines and the dismal reports from across the sea.

As evidence of this new trend and possibly a belated result of the union of the Nazis and the Communists is the closing of the patriotic splurge, *The American Way*.

It was a rabidly anti-Nazi production, overlooking entirely the possibilities of Communism as a national menace. In addition it was the most vigorous case of flag-waving Broadway had seen since George M. Cohan used to stop shows nightly by holding Old Glory aloft.

It decried Nazi penetration in this country with commendable fervor, but so one-sided was its approach to un-Americanism that in the light of the rapprochement of Hitler and Stalin, it lost much of its flavor. The perceptible drop in the box-office barometer was an indication of which way the wind was veering. Plans for a nation-wide tour were cancelled and then the Broadway run itself was terminated. But with true bravado and flourish, word was passed around that the play was leaving the scene of its triumphs not because business





"What A Life!" is filled with mirth-provoking scenes

had fallen off, but rather because the producers wished to adhere in the strictest sense to President Roosevelt's Neutrality Proclamation.

Why can't we have a little more of the imaginative genius which prompted that statement in front of the footlights, instead of behind the scenes?

The star system declared by many to be a detriment to the artistic development of the drama has proved that it is still a factor to be considered in formulating future theatrical plans. Much has been said in recent years about devoting a major portion of available funds to better scripts, technical details and directors, while whittling down on the high-priced stars who were classified as the white elephants of the theatre. Basically this may have been a good idea. No one can deny that there is a definite need for fresh plot variations and more original ideas.

Unfortunately, art is not now and probably never will be entirely self sustaining. That fact was never brought more forcibly to the front than during recent months. The three outstanding financial hits of the summer and early fall have been *The Philadelphia Story*, *The Little Foxes* and *No Time for Comedy*.

The first is Philip Barry's second contribution of the year, following the loud thud which *Here Come the Clowns* caused at the box office. It was a stirring combination of dramaturgy and philosophy which failed to achieve the popularity it deserved. Barry then returned with a gay and witty bit of trivia, embellished by the presence of the movie star, Katharine Hepburn. Standing room only was the result.

Katharine Cornell attracted audiences for over five months in a play which even the most lenient admit would not have lasted more than a few weeks without her. Tallulah Bankhead's brilliant performance and personal popularity is responsible in great measure for the success of *The Little Foxes*. Although she has had more to work with than Miss Cornell, there were several obvious flaws of characterization and structure in the play. Here again it is the performance and the magnetism of a star name which is bridging over many of the rough spots.

On the other side of the picture is Robert Emmett



Just another case of trouble for Henry Aldrich

Sherwood's Pulitzer Prize play *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*. The announcement that Raymond Massey was leaving for Hollywood caused an immediate drop in the advance sale and a corresponding avalanche of requests for tickets for the remaining Massey performances. His successor, Richard Gaines, is a craftsman equal to all the demands of the difficult role, but is not a box office name. The result is that the treasurer's reports have never managed to be more than just fair since Massey's departure.

Hollywood found out long ago that a few well-publicized names posted over the title of even the most ambitious of its ventures rarely fails to bring results. In fact, if a moral is to be drawn from the above, it might be patterned along the lines of the remark passed by an enthusiastic studio executive after a preview of *Romeo and Juliet*. He said, "Shearer's going to boost Shakespeare right up into the big money class." By repeating this typical Hollywoodese statement, we're not trying to disparage the attitude of the producers. They have found



A scene from the First National picture "Dust Be My Destiny," starring John Garfield and Priscilla Lane

through bitter and expensive experience that even the finest of the classics or of contemporary literature usually gets a mild reception from the general public without the lure of a Shearer or a Gable.

Can Hollywood remain neutral? Faced with the loss of a huge foreign market and unofficial pressure to take sides in the current international fracas, the studios will be sorely tempted to forget the fact the United States is not involved and that as a neutral nation we have not the right, either officially or unofficially, to foster an attitude either pro or con on the issues involved, without seriously considering the possible consequences.

The influence of the screen is probably more powerful than that of either press or radio and should be used without allowing prejudices or leanings toward one side or the other to interfere. Even at this early stage, the producers are being urged to cast their lot with those who would have us be "outspoken" about the causes and reasons for the present conflict. One New York motion picture reviewer and amateur diplomat has suggested a war code for the industry. Part of it urges the industry to "strike out in behalf of the helpless and the defenseless, place the blame for what is happening and what will happen where it belongs without compromise, but without venom. For the power of the cinema is such that one shudders at the thought of what it can accomplish if it is ever directed against any people or peoples with unrestricted fury."

The neutral stand which we hope to maintain in the months to come will not last long, if, as the gentleman suggests, the power of the cinema be directed against any people with either restricted or unrestricted fury.

Instead, the studios might set about creating a little international good will and mending a few of the gaping holes which have been left in the wake of *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* or *Blockade*. This latter production did little to endear American movies to the Spanish people and in the light of later happenings and recent reports from Spain it shows just how wrong Hollywood can be when it leaves the safe harbor of entertainment formulas and ventures forth in an endeavor to mold world opinion.

Attempts to censor our movies in other countries have sent Hollywood rushing to the defenses, claiming that we would not and could not tolerate a foreign censorship. Admirable though that stand is, we cannot help but compare it with the attitude of the producers toward the insertion of those subtle propaganda touches, so evident of late. Subtle, however, would not be the word to describe properly the recent Universal release, *The Sun Never Sets*, as obvious a piece of British propaganda as any product of Elstree or Denham. We're still wondering if it was an omission that the words of "God Save the King" did not flash on the screen at the conclusion for a community song fest.

Hollywood will have enough of a task on its hands in the near future to supply 48 states and those countries still importing our movies with wholesome and diverting entertainment. Taking sides in a controversy which already has too many sides and angles is neither good business nor practical neutrality.

The vanguard of the fall offerings to reach the nation's screens includes:

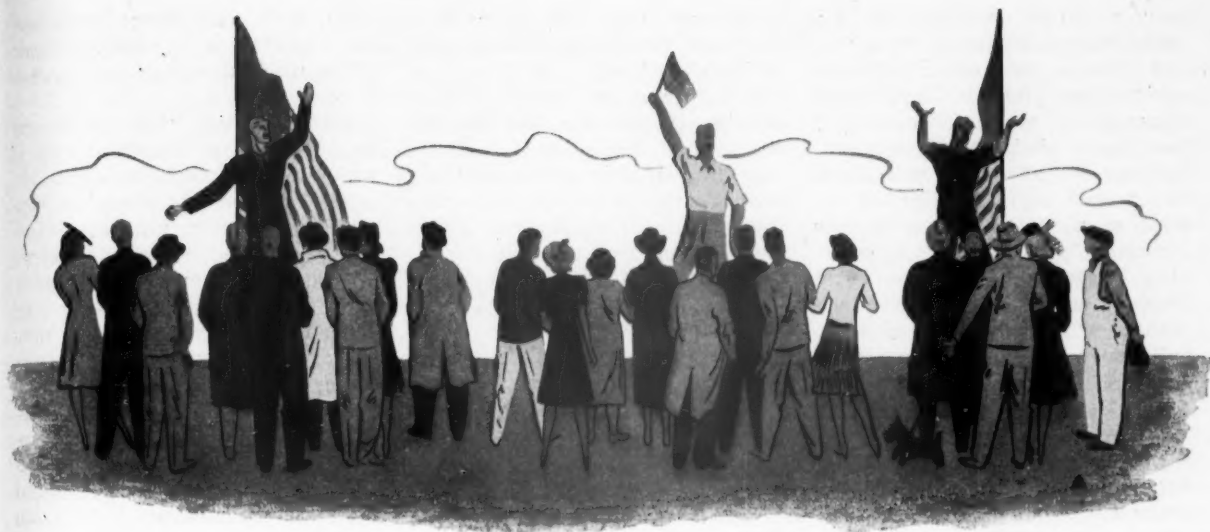
**THE WOMEN—MGM**—Although most of the objectionable lines and sequences of Clare Booth's highly publicized, all-feminine stage play have been eliminated, the general attitude and tone of the production in its treatment of marriage and divorce makes it unsuitable entertainment. Gilded with several of the screen's most glamorous ladies and an over-lavish production touch, it is gaudily impressive. Miss Booth's attempt at sensationalism resolves itself into nothing more than an unmasking of certain groups of unrepresentative women, and not the sweeping exposé she had planned it to be. Rosalind Russell rates first mention for her exceptionally fine performance, with Norma Shearer and Joan Crawford also conspicuously present.

**NURSE EDITH CAVELL—RKO**—Reviving the story of the heroic Nurse Cavell at this time was neither a very sagacious nor a very impartial gesture. Technically, little fault can be found with the framing which RKO has supplied for the story of the activities of the British nurse during the World War. Anna Neagle, the English star imported for the role, lends just the right note to the proceedings with the able assistance of Edna Mae Oliver, Zasu Pitts, May Robson and H. B. Warner. In spite of the excellent co-ordination of effort, we cannot help but feel that this raking of dead coals was unnecessary and an outstanding example of lack of discretion.

**DUST BE MY DESTINY—Warner Bros.**—John Garfield rose to screen prominence portraying cynical and disillusioned young men who were the by-products of an unfair economic system. Evidently he is to continue in that role indefinitely, or as long as audiences remain interested. This time the plot concerns a boy and girl who escape from a work farm to avoid a charge of murder. Their attempts to evade the police become quite melodramatic before reaching a climax in a tense courtroom scene. Underlying it all is a strain of bitterness and resentment which adds little to the film's entertainment value. Garfield renders an excellent account of himself. Priscilla Lane and Alan Hale are also in the cast.

**WHAT A LIFE—Paramount**—Last year this was one of the most popular hits of Broadway. It has lost little of its charm and originality in the transition from stage to screen and remains an interesting and amusing story. The problems and the humorous side of the 'teen age group have never been more sympathetically or realistically portrayed. Henry Aldrich and his predicaments have become nationally famous since Author Clifford Goldsmith brought them to public notice. Jackie Cooper and Betty Field sustain the principal characters with the proper amount of restraint and variety.

**BABES IN ARMS—MGM**—The current favorites of Young America are the irrepressible Mickey Rooney and the personable and talented Judy Garland. With the aid of some clever musical sequences and a story that never attempts to be anything other than a light musical comedy plot, they make the production one of the most enjoyable of the early season. Also based on a stage hit, it provides the young stars with ample opportunity to shine in both the histrionic and vocal departments. It is a picture the entire family will enjoy.



# This Word "Democracy"

*Whether or Not America Will Enjoy in the Future the Realities She Seeks Under the Word "Democracy" Depends on Her Acceptance of the Catholic Faith*

By WILLIAM THOMAS WALSH

*Decorations by Robert Allaway*

A VERY determined optimist might find some small consolation in the loose thinking and careless speaking with which the modern world is signally cursed. He might infer from them that men in general are not as bad at heart as the things they do. Even when wholly conceived in sins, steeped in iniquity, and, but for the grace of God, destined to be buried in hell, they shrink from doing what is unmistakably evil until they have persuaded themselves that it is somehow good; they will not approach the most decayed corner of their own souls until they have perfumed it with a fragrant word or two.

Thus people who would wince under the imputation of fornication find courage to seek the same reality under the camouflage of companionate marriage or divorce, murder becomes "mercy killing" or abortion, and the usurer hides his beady eyes and stony heart behind the whitened sepulchre of "personal finance." Yes, there is hypocrisy, there is cowardice in all this; but there is also a pitiful preference for something good, even

if only an appearance of good, over something acknowledged to be evil.

Nowadays the word that passes most often for a variety of realities too unpleasant for men to talk about, and too unpleasant for most of them to accept if they recognize them, is "democracy." President Woodrow Wilson (or perhaps one of his invisible but highly influential advisers) must have been aware of the sales possibilities of this slogan when he called upon his fellow Americans to fight "to make the world safe for democracy." And although that crusade achieved results just opposite to those promised, the advertising value of "democracy" continued to rise, doubtless in obedience to the economic law which puts a premium upon scarcity, until those expert publicists and window dressers who direct the world-wide efforts of the Comintern to destroy the *reality* of democracy took over the property and made it the watchword of a campaign of propaganda more intense, more widespread, and more dishonest than anything the world has ever seen.

To those Americans who prated, a little while ago, of "Spanish Democracy," there is little if any difference between "democracy" and "communism." Most of us, thank God, mean something else when we speak of democracy. We mean that beautiful ideal, never completely attainable and still in the experimental stage, which has been most successful thus far in our own United States.

Here, it has been so successful (through the bounty of God Who gave us unlimited resources and a population sprung from those who had shaken the dust of the Old World, with its oppressions and hypocrisies, from their feet), that we may assert as incontrovertible the proposition that nowhere, at any time in the world's history, have large masses of people been able to live together so reasonably, so prosperously on the whole, so happily and so untrammelled by despotic force, as we have. Nowhere else at any time (and this is still true, in spite of all the stress of the past ten years) could the poorest and hum-



blest aspire so hopefully to unlimited advancement in wealth, social position, and opportunity for achievement. Here, by some happy dispensation of Providence, men built more wisely than they knew; and our Bill of Rights still stands like a rock against which all the forces of greed and subversion have conspired and militated in vain. May it always be so. May there never be anything like either Communism or Fascism in this land, the last refuge for harassed humanity.

**Y**ET we must admit that democracy, like business, marriage or any other human activity, is subject to a law which is the inexorable consequence of the fall of man. This law, to put it briefly and crudely, is that man cannot pull himself up by his own bootstraps. This fallen image of God, with his soul fettered to a body, tends by his own unaided efforts to frustration and calamity; all that he touches becomes dust unless sanctified by some collaboration of the supernatural. Activity without prayer is futile.

The whole history of man's political experiments reminds us that democracy, so-called, is not at all immune from this law of the material world, "where moths and rust consume, and thieves break in and steal." The democracy of Athens was founded upon a cruel fiction; it was a democracy of 30,000 free men supported by a huge population of slaves. The Roman Republic was never a democracy in the modern ideological sense; it was an oligarchy, a plutocracy, another slave state which gradually fell by corruption, injustice, sensuality, and intrigue. There never was a real democracy among the ancient peoples. And it is instructive to notice that all the attempts to realize the ideal were shipwrecked, most often by the tendency of one group to gain control of the sources of power and to exploit their fellowmen.

Modern democracy, so-called, has often been traced to eleventh-century Spain, but let us be honest about it: the impetus which launched it in the modern world and gave it its form and direction was the essentially destructive power of the so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century. This is why the Catholic Church manifested no great enthusiasm for it, nay more, vigorously

condemned (and still condemns!) the whole philosophy of Liberalism which went hand in hand with it. For she knew her history, and remembering what men had done before without the grace of God, she was sure that those who openly proclaimed their intention of destroying the Church could never obtain anything but a spurious democracy.

The form of government to her has always been an accident. Twenty centuries of human history have taught her that all the freedom men need or can safely exercise *may* exist under a monarchy, an empire, or a dictatorship, and *may* be lacking in a so-called democracy. Never in history have the people ruled *en masse*, and in the nature of things they never can. Under all forms of polity, the majority have been ruled by a small minority, and what counts essentially is the spirit and intention of this minority. No "democracy" has ever given to the average citizen more personal freedom than was enjoyed under the Spanish monarchy of the late Middle Ages, strange as this may sound to the demagogues of democracy.

Catholic thinkers knew that if men got rid of kings they would fall prey to some other form of control, and they had strong suspicions that when aristocracy passed, the guiding minority might be more selfish and ignoble, more cruel and hypocritical. In the Middle Ages men had certain obligations to the king and to other feudal superiors, but they were protected, insofar as they would listen to the Church, from the tyranny of usury, from the tyranny of sensuality with all its devastating consequences in what we now call divorce and birth control and so on, and above all from the tyranny of despair. In the Middle Ages the enormous potential influence of finance was held strictly subservient to the political power, because the Church had moulded in most men a right conscience concerning the form of theft known as usury.

And because the Church impressed upon her followers a due respect for human personality, such a thing as universal conscription would have been looked upon with abhorrence; the king often had to hire men for his wars, and he himself, and others who benefited most by conflict, fought in the front lines and risked their own skins, while

Tom, Dick, and Harry performed camp services or remained at home tilling the fields and producing commodities.

Was life ideal, then, under the feudal minority? Heaven knows it was not. But it was better organized, better balanced, and above all, happier, in the main, than life before or since; it had no labor problem, no suicide problem, no divorce problem, no birth control problem; the whole community took part in communal entertainments, such as processions, dances and plays, and the workmen enjoyed the thrill of artistry. Whatever the form of government, in empire or kingdom or republican city state, there existed that order without which there can be no peace, justice or happiness.

And this order proceeded not from the form of political organization, but from the influence of the Catholic Church. With all the weight of human imperfection to drag along with her, she made all things new wherever she was free to do so. She never had influence enough (notwithstanding the modern calumny to the contrary); she was shackled by evil kings, betrayed by weak or wicked members, constantly assailed by the sinister powers of this world. But where there was failure, it was their fault, not hers. It was interference of the State with the Church, not vice versa, that brought about the exile at Avignon, the Schism, and the resulting laxity which was the pretext for the disruption of Christendom.

**T**HE Reformation boasted of having freed numbers of men from the yoke of the Catholic Church. So it did; and it freed them from more than that. It freed them (and this became more and more evident with the passing of time) from the sweet yoke of Christ; from the bonds of faith, hope and charity. Cutting them off from the supernatural, it left them naked to despair, until suicide on a large scale returned to the world. The magnificent hospital system of the Middle Ages perished with the monasteries that had created them. The guilds were shattered, and workmen, quarreling with each other, were left at the mercy of rapacious employers, while poverty became a reproach, and riches a badge of respectability. An epidemic of witch-burning destroyed

150,000 lives—mostly in the Protestant countries; in benighted Catholic Spain, on the other hand, this wicked folly was prevented by the Inquisition. Heads fell, thrones were emptied, the old aristocracies perished, the world was changed.

The new order promised liberty to all men, but actually gave it only to a base and cunning minority of money lenders whose real allegiance was selfishness and whose god was gold. By degrees they became the invisible government behind all governments. For land, the principal measure of value in the Middle Ages, they substituted a paper currency through whose manipulation they were able to multiply the potency of their gold many times over. Edmund Burke noticed how, during the French Revolution, they substituted paper for the old stable criterion whose turn-over was too slow for their purposes.

And thus in time they became the financiers of industry, the masters of politicians and of parliaments, who gave their consent for wars and collected their heavy toll on peace, who exercised control over credit (and therefore over business depressions and prosperity), until, as Pope Pius XI said of them, "No one dare breathe against their will."

Democracy had served them well, but they had no real interest in it as such. And indeed, their operations made anything like real democracy impossible, by preventing the fair distribution of wealth without which democracy inevitably becomes plutocracy. Hence, under the universal system of usury which now covers the world like an invisible snare, we are witnessing the last throes of modern democracy, as it changes, under the hands of these alchemists, through communism or fascism into what will probably be some form of state socialism or state capitalism—which are essentially the same thing.

This of course means slavery for the great mass of mankind, not only economic and political slavery, but spiritual slavery, for the masters of money are generally no friends of Christ, and Christ alone can make men free. Not only Russia, Germany and Italy, but England, France and the United States are obviously approaching the day (and the war now going on will bring it to our very doors) when dictatorship of some sort will be inevitable.

Paradoxically, the only strong friend democracy in any true sense has left in the world is the Catholic Church that condemned the insincere liberalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries! I do not mean that she has committed herself to any particular form of polity; but she is the only remaining friend of the reality that honest men seek behind this word democracy. What they mean half the time, of course, is not democracy at all. Sometimes they mean representative government, forgetting that Spain had representative government under a monarchy in the Middle Ages, and very successfully too. (England, of course, is not a democracy.) Sometimes, and most often, perhaps, men mean simply "justice." But how can justice depend upon a mere form? Justice proceeds from hearts of just men, whether they be kings, dictators, presidents or what you will. Call a man fifty thousand presidents, and if he be a corrupt man, nothing but injustice can proceed from him.



The Church was never deceived by appearances. She has always known it to be true that:

"A man may smile, and smile,  
and be a villain—

At least I'm sure it may be so in  
Yes, and in the United States, or  
Denmark."

England, or any other country. Without justice no form of government can succeed. With justice, any form may serve mankind.

Nevertheless we Americans are still inclined to believe that our own form of government—call it republi-

can or democratic as you please—has advantages possessed by no other. It lays more emphasis upon the sacredness of human personality. It recognizes certain rights as inalienable. This is what most of us mean when we praise our own democracy: we mean the principle that the state exists for the sake of the individual, and not vice versa. The same principle was asserted by Spanish medieval monarchists and by English monarchists—but let that pass. What is important to notice here is that the Catholic Church is, and always was, the only bulwark of this conception of human dignity and freedom.

Indeed, it would not be difficult to defend the thesis that what we mean by democracy can never be made to work tolerably for any length of time except in a Catholic country. In such a country the citizens will have resources higher than their own. They will need them, for the task before them will include, among other things, the following:

- (1) The suppression of usury and all its works and pomps.
- (2) Suppression of secret societies which are a state within the state, and make representative government a farce.
- (3) Control of money and credit by the elected representatives of the people.

And I doubt whether human nature will be strong enough to accomplish the above, without

- (4) A Catholic sense of justice; and this involves the primary justice of acknowledging the claims of God and His Church.

America stands, with terrible literalness, at the great crossroads of her history. She has been free and happy until now: but her pioneer days are over. Whether or not she will enjoy in the future the realities she seeks under the word "democracy" depends upon her acceptance, wholeheartedly, of the Catholic Faith. This demands of the Catholic population, on whom the chief responsibility for the preservation of liberty must fall, nothing short of heroic prudence, fortitude and zeal; it may even demand (and how else was any other great land won for Christ?) the blood of martyrs. Let Catholics then be united. It is not too late to build a Christian democracy under the free western stars.



# WOMAN *G* WOMAN



By KATHERINE BURTON

## *Teachings of Christ Practicable*

**T**HERE HAVE BEEN many reasons for wars in the past and there will no doubt be many in the future. I should like to hazard two reasons that seem basic ones for the existence of such a cancer on life. One is the refusal to admit that Christian principles are practical and not visionary, and the other is that no nation is willing to admit that it is in the wrong about anything.

A new volume in the *History of Civilization* Series is out—this time an analysis of the social and political forces that form the background for Jesus—for His life, His acts, His death. The author considers Jesus as belonging to the succession of great prophets—the consciences of Israel. His tragedy, says the author, a Sorbonne teacher, was due to the fact that He opposed Roman imperialism, and adds that during His day there was much rebellion, there were many who saw visions, and Jesus was one of these—the greatest of them, he hastens to add, as they always do—and His social teachings are so lofty and unworldly that they could be followed only by those who think in apocalyptic form.

Such a statement is utter nonsense, of course. There is no single statement of Our Lord that could not be carried out and lived by those persons of good will for whom the angels sang the night He was born. The Sorbonne professor could face me with his specific objections and I venture to say if I were given time I could find plenty of places where all or some of Our Lord's teachings had been carried out—and successfully.

## *A Little National Candor Desirable*

**T**HE OTHER REASON FOR WAR is the inability of nations to admit they are wrong. Unless our mentality is defective every one of us must realize there was something wrong about the partitioning of land after the last war. For one thing, the spectacle of Danzig with ninety-five per cent of its personnel German, unable to be a part of Germany as it wished. Such a thing cannot make for lasting peace—it is merely a handle for a fanatic to use for his purposes.

When one reads of the treatment of Ireland at the beginning of the 1900's, it is unbelievable that an enlightened country like England could have done it. Has Palestine been handled fairly? What about the treatment of the natives of the Belgian Congo some years ago? And why are all these things done? For power of empire, of course. But why empire? For money primarily, if the truth were told—for diamonds in the Transvaal, for rubber in the Congo, for fortunes in

sugar, in timber, in coal, in steel. And after a lifetime of contemplating these treasures that have been laid up on earth, at the expense of so much suffering and hunger and death, how about the treasures that might have been laid up in Heaven by practicing some of the "lofty and unworldly principles" of the extremely idealistic and practical Jesus?

## *The New Anti-Christian Alliance*

**I**N ALL THE UNHAPPINESS of new conflict on earth I feel there is one gleam of hope, and that is that at last we have a sort of line-up of Christian and anti-Christian nations. Since England, with no credit to herself, has been saved from a Moscow alliance, it is interesting to see that the nominally Christian nations of Europe are lined up against a non-Christian group. The Valhalla gods' creed of might, the Russian disregard of individual life that is a Mongol inheritance, are lined up against the basic Christian code. Perhaps in that fact there is the beginning of the downfall of doctrines of hate and the beginning of a realization of a doctrine of love. And perhaps in time it will rise from humanitarian love of neighbor to something higher.

## *"Rebecca" Good or Bad?*

**F**OR MR. WARD CLARKE and those who may have read his delightful letter about *Rebecca* last month I want to say that I must add I had not thought of the possibility of the foremost moralist in the country being the White List reviewer of that novel. But if he is I insist then that the thing happened that does occur now and then: Jove nodded. I hope when Jove wakes up he will say, "Pardon me, but I must have dropped off for a moment."

Some years ago a whole galaxy of the hierarchy sat in a row before a play which was being given as a benefit performance for a certain charitable organization. For all I know the person who selected the play may also have been a foremost moralist, but he certainly selected an odd play for those churchmen to honor with their presence. For it was one—*The Wind and the Rain* it was called—which most delightfully portrayed the happiness and sorrows of a young couple who were living together without benefit of clergy. But, just as in *Rebecca*, the ugly fact was completely concealed by the exquisite writing.

Some day I shall set forth and get a clerical questionnaire on this subject, like a Gallup poll. And on some future page I shall publish my findings. Until then I shall let *Rebecca* rest, and her murderer too, in peace.





# Uncle Jeremy's Birthday Party.

"YOU know, Dick," Juliet observed to me the other day, "you ought to write down the facts of what happened at Uncle Jeremy's birthday party."

"But the facts were so dull," I remonstrated. "An ordinary Victorian dinner-party. It was the other thing, the fantastic item, that made it interesting."

Juliet eyed me challengingly.

"It remains a fact that it was the most successful, quite the jolliest, dinner-party that Uncle Jeremy ever collected," was her retort. "That is perfectly true," I admitted. And ever since then I have been setting about to tell the story of that particular birthday party of Uncle Jeremy's—the one, that is to say, when we sat down thirteen—or was it fourteen?

Uncle Jeremy is Juliet's uncle; my uncle by marriage. He lives in one of those roomy old houses in the suburbs of London which are being shovelled away to make room for modern blocks of flats. It stands close to one of the historical green patches encircled by London and outer London but claiming sanctuary from the murderous jerry builder. Juliet and her younger sister Eileen found him a bit difficult to manage in the days when they lived with him. He is a widower, and Juliet did the house-keeping for him up to the time of our marriage. Uncle Jeremy has always had very definite views on a variety of subjects. He holds them still, but in those days he upheld them with a rather fearsome vivacity.



BY  
ENID DINNIS.

Through Edwardian and Georgian times he kept steadfast faith with a tradition in which the Solemnity of Family Gatherings was observed as strictly as the Feasts of the Church (Uncle Jeremy is a fine Catholic of a rather pronounced John Bull type). The principal family gathering took place on Uncle Jeremy's birthday. On that occasion the clan gathered under a grim sense of duty and sat at Uncle Jeremy's board—the dining-room table merited that ponderous title—and became bored, like unto the table.

As Juliet's fiancé I was invited to the birthday party. Now and again an outsider was admitted to that privilege. On the occasion of which I am now speaking the invitation had likewise been extended to a particularly delightful young man, an Italian, who was in love with Eileen, Juliet's younger sister.

There was likely to be trouble about Eileen's love affair. Uncle Jeremy possessed the typical Briton's prejudice against a foreigner. We always used to say that the supernatural character of the papacy was proved by the fact that Uncle Jeremy was in communion with the see of Peter whose successor was an Italian. (St. Peter himself was presumably British!) Eileen's uncle and guardian turned a decidedly cold eye on the Count. His inclusion in the birthday party was rather an achievement. As it was, he and I were both invited to stay that particular week-end, the party being on the Monday.

"It's going to be difficult," Juliet sighed. "Half the family are not on speaking terms—that's to say," she corrected herself, "Uncle Tom's wife and Cousin Louisa are barely civil to one another, and the husbands are daggers drawn—a row at the Golf Club, or something, upset them. And I'm sure the Count will drop a political brick and ruin his chances. I shall be thankful when it is all over."

"It doesn't sound too cheerful," I admitted. "I suppose family gatherings are permitted for the good of our souls."

"We shall be thirteen altogether," Juliet said.

"Not an auspicious number," I commented. "I hope nobody is superstitious."

"I hope not," Juliet laughed. "Uncle Jeremy would chew them up into little pieces. He hates superstitions. He'll enjoy sitting down thirteen."

It was some hours later that Juliet came to me with a face as long as her arm.

"Would you believe it?" she said. "I've just been speaking to the Count and I mentioned that we would be thirteen, and he declares if we are he won't sit down with us. He means it too!"

It was evident that the Count did mean it. The position was serious. "We shall have to find a fourteenth guest," Juliet said. "No, Dick, of course you can't go away and reduce us to twelve"—I had hastily made that suggestion. "Uncle would be frightfully offended."

Then I made another suggestion.

"How about my friend Forbes, the actor?" I said. "Uncle Jeremy's rather keen on the stage, and I can tell him that Forbes is part of myself—we used to have rooms at one time—and that I'd like to introduce him to Uncle Jeremy. We'll think of something to tell him, anyway. Forbes will play up all right."

So I rang up Forbes, there and then. Just as I expected, he was sport enough to promise to get us out of our hole; and Juliet contrived somehow to get her uncle to agree to the extra guest. She managed it without undue romancing. Juliet is a wonderful woman.

It was on the actual morning of Uncle Jeremy's birthday, when everything had been arranged smoothly that I got a call on the telephone.

It was from Forbes.

"Awfully sorry, old chap," Forbes said, "but I'm feeling frightfully queer. I'm afraid I'm in for the flu."

"Sorry you're ill," I replied, and then added, selfishly, "and a bit sorry for myself. We'd got your role all fixed up for you to play. I suppose you couldn't send along an understudy?"

"Wish I could," he answered. "Awfully sorry not to be able to help you out of your mess."

THEN Juliet came along and I put down the receiver and told her what had happened. "Here's a pretty go," I said. "Forbes has got the flu and can't come along tonight."

"Then we shall be thirteen," Juliet said. "Oh, dear! Whatever will the Count say? I told him we would be fourteen."

"He'd better get the flu, too," I said, grimly. "Silly owl!"

"It's too late," Juliet said. "He's in the most robust health, and besides, he's too straight and simple to do a thing like that. But," she added, sadly, "he won't sit down thirteen. It's a complex. He'll be downright about it, and poor little Eileen will break her heart."

Then she added: "And I had put your Mr. Forbes between Aunt Jane and Cousin Louisa as a kind of buffer. Didn't you say that he was big and burly?"

"Well," I said, "I should have a place laid for Forbes, if I were you. He might feel better and come along."

"Or he might send the understudy," Juliet said, with just a hint of sarcasm at my optimism.

"Anyway," I said, "if you lay for fourteen perhaps our friend will count the places and not the guests. If I take him to task about his superstition he will probably take himself off and that would give dire offense. Better take the risk. He may not notice that we are thirteen."

"The table is very wide," Juliet reflected, "and I will make the decoration as obstructive as I can. There will be six places on each side, one unoccupied."

"And the conflicting relatives on both sides of it!" I mused. "I'm sorry about the buffer, Juliet."

Juliet disapproved of flippancy. "I shall pray to Our Lady of Cana," she said. "She understood what a mess-up at a party meant. This will be much worse than not having enough wine."

I was not quite sure whether Juliet had forgiven me until I saw her again just before lunch. She was looking better.

"I've just met Sister Monica from the Home for the Disabled," she said, "and they've got an old saint there who gets everything he asks for. She's going to get him to pray that everything goes off all right tonight. Her remark was that, being a mystic, he found nothing trivial in life. Nice, wasn't it?"

"Reminds me of that saying of Father Vincent McNabb's," I said, "the mystic wherever he goes is as welcome as a wedding guest."

"I like that," Juliet said. "I am sure Our Lady of Cana will see us through. Who would have thought that the Count could be such a goose?"

After lunch the atmosphere began to get rather charged with the miasma of relations whose relations were somewhat strained. They had arrived, some of them, overnight, and Juliet was busy playing hostess. I slipped out to get a breather on the common near to which Uncle Jeremy's house stood, leaving the strained relations to Juliet and Uncle Jeremy. I felt just a little bit mean.

The common was a sylvan spot where one could wander through leafy glades and listen to the birds, just as though one were a hundred miles from London instead of on the border. I sat myself down on a seat on one side of the broad path that ran across the common. Facing me, on the other side, there was a stretch of greensward, shaded by trees, beyond which there was a narrow foot-path leading through the miniature wood out onto the gorse-covered expanse of common land.

It was a favorite spot for picnics, and for exercising one's dog. It was amusing to sit and watch the intermittent procession of human beings who wended their way along the path. Every type seemed to be providing a sample, or samples.

A boy and girl came along—a pair of lovers, courting in romantic surroundings. Then a father and mother with a perambulator, a toddler following behind them. Two middle-aged women with work-bags—a solitary one with a book. The ages of man seemed to be represented in due order. It was exactly like a stage scene, with exits right and left. An arcadian scene, as in *As You Like It* or



*There was something in her tone that made me ask her: "Did you think that it was unoccupied?"*

*A Midsummer Night's Dream.* One could picture Touchstone disporting himself there.

After a minute or two there appeared yet another figure. This time it was an elderly man. He was walking with the aid of a stick but there was something distinguished in his bearing—something that suggested a stage figure more definitely than the others had done. He paused, and stood under the trees facing the patch of greensward. I could see his face now. It was a most arresting face. I made up my mind that he was, or rather, had been an actor. I wondered if he had been the hero in those old melodramas where the hero was possessed of noble qualities to match a handsome countenance. It was an extraordinarily noble face.

I watched him. I wondered if he, too, was feeling that this green patch was a stage. I expected him to start declaiming Shakespeare. (He might have been Hamlet in his time). Had he fallen on hard times? I somehow felt that he had—that he was thinking of a past which had failed to provide for his present.

He stood there for a few moments, then passed on as the others had done, and made his exit through the left wing.

I wished that Juliet had been there with me. She would have entered into the spirit of the thing. The alfresco stage play would have appealed to her. But she was entertaining the terrible relations.

I returned home prepared to face the birthday function and its direful hazard, definitely refreshed by my rural interlude in one glade which had staged the seven ages of Man.

We assembled in the drawing-room (Uncle Jeremy had no truck with lounges) before dinner. The Count was there. Eileen was looking lovely in a lilac frock. We had said nothing to her about the fateful number and her admirer's peculiarity. He was such a thoroughly nice fellow that we did not want to give him away. He came up to me just before the gong was sounded for dinner.

"Is it true that your friend isn't able to come?" he asked me. I don't know how he had got wind of it.

"He wasn't feeling well, this morning," I said, evasively.

I could see that he was thoroughly upset. "We will be sitting down thirteen," he said. "I'd rather not come in to dinner than make the thirteenth."

I became desperate. "I asked my friend to send someone in his place," I said. "He may do so yet. We've prepared for fourteen."

I hoped that Our Lady of Cana would consider that I was keeping within the bounds of truth.

That got our friend the Count safely down to the dining-room, anyway. We moved to our respective seats. The table was wide and Juliet had judiciously piled up the floral decoration so that the guests on one side were practically cut off from the others. The Count was on the opposite side to the empty place which should have held Forbes. Uncle Jeremy presided at his end, Juliet at hers.

I was on the same side as the Count. I watched him as he approached the table. I wished that I had warned him on no account to let Uncle Jeremy know of the bee in his bonnet. It was too late now. He ran his eye over the opposite side of the table. I guessed he would be counting heads and then spotting the vacant place. But he sat himself down quietly enough. The danger appeared to have passed.

I had been put in charge of Cousin Louisa's sister, a lady rather hard of hearing. Less formidable than Cousin Louisa herself, she was nevertheless a whole-time job. I settled down to listen to a diagnosis of her complaints and a description of the spas at which she had obtained relief.

As dinner proceeded I was moved to peer through the thicket of maidenhair fern and carnations and take a peep at what was happening over the way. I caught sight of the countenance of Aunt Jane; but before I had time to reflect on the fact that it was no longer frozen I was startled to discover that the vacant seat was occupied. Seated between the conflicting relatives in the place which should have been occupied by Forbes was a guest whose face I recognized at once. It was that of the old actor whom I had seen early in the afternoon on the common. Cousin Louisa was beaming on the one side of him



and Uncle Tom's wife, of whom I also caught a glimpse, was doing the same on the other.

So my friend Forbes *had* sent an understudy! Good old Forbes! And my old friend of this afternoon had obtained a professional engagement which he had come off the shelf to fulfill.

He must have arrived just as we were going in to dinner. Juliet would have tackled the situation. I glanced across at her. She was certainly looking very tranquil.

I was becoming conscious that Uncle Jeremy's birthday party was being rather a jolly affair. I could see my first cousin-in-law-once-removed that-was-to-be smiling in the most amiable way as I peeped through a chink in the flower screen. If I may say so with due modesty, her sister was finding me sympathetic. The Count appeared to be enjoying himself. I hoped my old actor was enjoying himself, too. From where I was seated he was entirely invisible. I was still wondering how he had accomplished his gate-crashing.

The time came for the ladies to retire. I was relieved of my charge. Cousin Diana no longer claimed my attention. I was preparing to move across to the other side of the table when I noticed that the understudy was no longer in his seat. He must have followed the ladies out of the room. I got up quickly and went in pursuit of him. Queer! that he should not have known the ropes. I expected to find him in the hall, realizing his mistake, but there was no sign of him in the hall. I went over and peeped into the drawing-room. He was not there. He must have taken it that he had fulfilled his engagement and slipped away. It was a curious thing to do.

SEEING that Uncle Jeremy was taken up in conversation I edged up to the Count and remarked:

"I expect you are comforted to find that we did number fourteen."

"Fourteen?" he repeated. "No, we were only thirteen. I had an idea there were fourteen when I first looked around, but when I counted again there were thirteen." Then he looked at me and burst out:

"What an utter fool you must have thought me! I realize now what a miserable bounder I was to upset things like that, but I've had that queer kink about thirteen at table all

my life—up till now. I've done with it now."

I didn't press the point about his having miscounted the number—about his first count being the correct one—I was so mightily relieved to think that he had conquered that silly superstition. Better let him think that we *had* been thirteen and that he had defied the ill omen and demolished the complex!

I got hold of Juliet when we went into the drawing-room.

"It's gone off A1," she said. "Did you see Aunt Jane and Cousin Louisa? They've become bosom friends. Aunt Jane said just now that it seemed to be too silly to sit there without speaking as the seat between them was empty, so they just broke the ice, and all's well in that direction. It's rather wonderful."

"It is rather wonderful," I agreed. "The seat between them *was* unoccupied, I suppose. Forbes didn't happen to send an understudy?"

Juliet gave a long look at me. "Whatever made you ask that?" she said. There was something in her tone that made me ask her: "Did you think that it was unoccupied?"

"I'm, I'm not sure," she said. "I had a queer feeling of someone being there. But of course there was no one. How could there have been?"

"It was an uncommonly jolly dinner," I remarked. "I even got quite interested in Cousin Diana's adventures. She's a sport, isn't she, to get about as she does?"

"I was afraid you'd be awfully bored," Juliet said.

"It struck me that no one was bored tonight," I observed. Then I told her about the Count and the sudden removal of his complex.

"He's a sane man now," I said. "I am sure he would sooner upset the salt than a dinner-party."

"It's all rather wonderful," was Juliet's comment.

Uncle Jeremy's birthday party ended as gaily as it had begun, or rather, it more than compensated for its frozen beginnings in the geniality of the later proceedings. Uncle Tom and Cousin Louisa's husband parted on the best terms. The members of the younger generation expressed themselves delighted with their evening, and it struck me that they meant it.

Next day I made a clean breast to Juliet about my queer impression of seeing the old actor sitting in the vacant seat, and taking him for an

understudy sent by my friend Forbes.

She thought for a while, then she said:

"I believe Sister Monica could help us. You know I told you about the old saint who prays and gets things for people. Well, she told me his story—it's rather odd. He was an actor, quite a well-known one. He met with an accident that crippled him, and then he fell on hard times. He's been in the Home for years. He just manages to get out onto the Common which is quite close by. It was she, not your friend Forbes, who told him about the pickle that we were in."

"But," I said, perplexedly, "he didn't come. The seat was empty. No one saw him except myself. The Count seemed to have got an impression that there was someone there, but only for a second."

"I didn't see him," Juliet said, thoughtfully, "but I *felt* him. I must go and see Sister Monica and find out more."

IT WAS some days later that Juliet wrote me the result of her visit to the Home.

"I was just too late," she wrote. "Sister Monica's old saint had died suddenly the day before I went. What she told me about him was wonderful. She said he was as holy as the mystics that we read about, and as human as Our Lady of Cana! She had told him all about Uncle Jeremy's birthday party and the pickle that we were in, and he was immensely interested, and so amused at the idea of finding an understudy for the actor guest who had got the flu. They send the folk to bed early at the Home, and he used to lie there and pray. No doubt he was praying for us while we were at dinner. Can you wonder that it was such a success?"

So that's the story. It certainly has a fantastic element which makes that particular birthday party worth recording. Juliet, by the way, objects to my calling it fantastic, but I think I have been careful to set down the facts of the case.

Eileen and her Count are happily married and living in Italy. Uncle Jeremy has a competent housekeeper and still manages to preside at his birthday party which Juliet takes due care to place under the patronage of Our Lady of Cana and of the understudy whom she sent to our assistance on the occasion when the birthday party went off so extraordinarily well.



# The SIGN-POST

• The SIGN-POST is a service of instruction in the Catholic Faith and related matters for our subscribers. Letters containing questions should be addressed to The Sign-Post, c/o THE SIGN, Union City, N. J. Please give full name and address as a sign of good faith. Neither initials nor place of residence will be printed except with the writer's consent. • Questions should be about the faith and history of the Catholic Church and related matters. • Questions should be kept separate from other business. • Questions are not answered by personal letter. • Matters of conscience and urgent moral cases should be brought to one's Pastor or Confessor. • Anonymous letters will not be considered.

## The Unjust Steward

Please explain the meaning of the Gospel for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, the Parable of the Unjust Steward. Why did the Lord commend the steward, when the latter had acted unjustly? What is the meaning of the text, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light?" Also, why did Jesus advise His disciples to "make friends of the mammon of iniquity?"—NEW PALTZ, N. Y.

The Parable of the Unjust Steward has given commentators considerable difficulty, but these points are quite clear. The "lord" who praised the steward was not our Lord, Jesus Christ, but the lord of the steward. The steward's master praised the *cleverness* of the steward, not his injustice. Our Lord then took occasion from the shrewdness and foresight of the steward to say that worldly people are usually more solicitous for their temporal welfare than believers are for their spiritual good and eternal welfare. Jesus did not intimate that we should adopt the unjust and sinful methods of the steward, but rather his care and foresight for his own advantage, which should be exercised by Christians in a moral way. There were Pharisees in the audience, and Jesus rebuked their avarice by stressing the duty and benefit of almsgiving. Money and temporal wealth, which are so often obtained sinfully, or used sinfully, can be made the means of obtaining true wealth by almsgiving. The poor benefited will pray God to bless their benefactors, and the prayers of the poor are powerful before God.

## Church and Autopsies

Will you kindly state the attitude of the Church on autopsies?—MONTREAL.

The Church makes no objection to autopsies on the bodies of the dead (post-mortems), provided they are done for a good purpose, with due respect, and permission of parents or relatives of the deceased is obtained.

## The Old Testament As History: Jonas and Whale

Must the incidents of the Old Testament, e.g., Jonas and the whale, be strictly believed?—BROOKLYN, N. Y.

On June 23, 1905, this question was put to the Biblical Commission in Rome, instituted by Pope Leo XIII: "Whether we may admit as a principle of sound exegesis the opinion which holds that those books of Holy Scripture which are regarded as historical, either wholly or in part, sometimes narrate what is not really history, properly so-called, and objectively true, but only the appearance of history, and are intended to convey a meaning different from the strictly literal or historical sense of the words?"

The answer is as follows: "In the negative; excepting always the case, not to be easily or rashly admitted, and then only on the supposition that it is not opposed to the teaching of the Church, and subject to her decision, that it can be proved by solid arguments that the sacred writer did not intend to give a true and strict history, but proposed rather to set forth, under the guise and form of history, a parable or an allegory or some meaning distinct from the literal or historical signification of the words."

Hence, it is clear that the Biblical Commission forbids us to adopt, as a general principle of sound exegesis, the assumption that the books of the Old Testament, written in a historical manner, are not to be interpreted as really historical. Yet, "the Biblical Commission, while urging a prudent conservatism, did not deem it impossible that solid arguments might be found to prove that a sacred writer did not intend to narrate history properly so-called, but under the guise of history wrote a parable or allegory. This ruling supposes that what in the past was regarded as historical may, perhaps, in the future be proved by solid arguments to belong to another class of literature." (*The Book of Jona*, Bird, xxx, Westminster Version). While the

Church does not command us to believe in the story of Jonas and the whale as a historical fact, our present knowledge does not warrant us to deny its probability. There is no good reason to doubt the possibility of a certain type of whale swallowing a man.

### Van Paasen's "Days of Our Years"

*A friend of mine has been reading "Days of Our Years" by Pierre Van Paasen, who claims that the former Spanish Government was liberal and that General Franco is a Fascist. He also goes on to say that churches, etc., were destroyed by the Fascists and the blame put on the Republicans. He claims that the Pope was in favor of Franco because of Fascist Italy. Can you briefly prove the inaccuracy of these statements?—BROOKLINE, MASS.*

It would require a book as big as *Days of Our Years* to refute or to straighten out the many lies, half truths, suppressions and insinuations that are contained in it. *THE SIGN* (April, 1939) said that the book "is a spread of ill-digested deceptions . . . When Pierre pontificates on Marshals Foch and Lyautey and Cardinal Mercier and Cardinal Innitzer and the Vatican, if he does not qualify for the charge of common, ordinary liar, he is surely guilty of grave suppressions . . . And the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, the Arabic reprisals in Palestine, the Civil War in Spain? Glaring omissions, deceits, insinuations, some fact and much propagandizing fiction." Strong words, but justified! For the true picture of the Spanish war, or at least for an account of the other side, it is necessary to review nearly all that has appeared in *THE SIGN* and other Catholic sources. For a cursory glimpse of the affair, we recommend Father Code's *The Spanish War and Lying Propaganda*, published by The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York, N. Y., at five cents, net.

### Sufficient Matter of Confession: Daily Communion

(1) *If a person has not committed any sin since his last confession, should he confess sins already forgiven, when he wishes to receive the Sacrament of Penance?*

(2) *Is it necessary to go to confession before receiving Holy Communion on Sunday, if one has confessed on Thursday in preparation for the First Friday?* (3) *Must special permission be obtained before one may receive Holy Communion daily?*—NEW YORK.

(1) Absolution cannot be validly conferred unless the penitent confesses sufficient matter; that is, at least a venial sin. Those who have no new sins to confess since their last confession, must confess a sin of their past life, even though already absolved, in order to receive the Sacrament of Penance. If one examines his conscience thoroughly, he will usually find sufficient matter for absolution.

(2) No, unless one has lost sanctifying grace by the commission of mortal sin.

(3) The conditions for frequent and even daily Communion are essentially the same as those for annual

Communion—the state of sanctifying grace and fasting from the previous midnight. It is also required that one should receive with the right intention, that is, for the purpose of one's spiritual perfection and not through pride or in a routine manner. Pope Pius X approved the Decree on Frequent and Daily Communion, *Sacra Tridantina Synodus*, December 20, 1905, which advised the faithful to seek the advice of their confessors, in order that "frequent and daily Communion be undertaken with greater prudence and enriched with greater merit."

### Difficult Child-Birth

*What is the attitude of the Catholic Church in the following case? A husband is asked to decide between the life of an unborn child and that of his wife, in a case of difficult child-birth. Is he bound to choose the life of his child, in preference to that of his wife?—BOSTON, MASS.*

In a case of difficult child-birth, a conscientious and competent physician endeavors to save both mother and child by morally lawful means, but what he may not do is to directly kill the child in order to save the mother. If the only way to relieve the mother is to cause an abortion, it is forbidden by Christian morals to do so, for abortion is direct killing of the innocent, which is never lawful. The preference in this case is the observance of the moral law. This question has been dealt with more at length in past issues of *THE SIGN*, notably in the August, 1938, number.

### Eucharistic Fast

*Kindly outline the history of fasting before receiving Holy Communion, from the Last Supper to the present day. The Apostles received but were not fasting. Also please give the rules about receiving at Midnight Mass, or at early morning Masses which are said for certain groups, like printers, to which many people go after dances and theater parties, at which refreshments are served; also for the sick and dying.—POINT PLEASANT, N. J.*

It is true that Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper and that the Apostles received the Sacrament after they had eaten the Pasch. It is also true that the early Christians for some time observed the custom, called the agape, when they ate and drank together and afterward received the Holy Eucharist. But this custom was the occasion of abuse, as St. Paul reveals in the II Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter II. The practice of receiving Holy Communion fasting began to take its place, even in the Apostolic Age, and by St. Augustine's day (4th century) it was universally observed, except on Holy Thursday, when the Eucharist was received after the agape, but even this custom gradually died out.

The principal reason for the introduction of fasting Communion was reverence for the true Body and Blood of Christ, which the Church wished the faithful to receive before they had taken any material food or drink.

There are exceptions to the rule about fasting Com-



munion. Thus, Viaticum may be received at any time. It is lawful for a non-fasting priest to complete the Sacrifice of the Mass, if the celebrant should die after the consecration, and no other priest who is fasting is available. Those who have been sick in bed for a month and have no certain hope of a speedy recovery may receive Holy Communion once or twice a week, on the advice of their confessor, after taking medicine or nourishment in a liquid form.

The obligation begins to bind at midnight, but those who intend to receive at a Midnight Mass, or a very early Mass, are advised to fast for a few hours before.

### Blessed Articles: Saints' Names in Baptism: Scapular Promise

(1) If an article has been blessed once, can additional blessings, e.g., the indulgences of a happy death and the stations of the cross, be attached to it? (2) May a person to be baptized ever take a name that is not a saint's name? (3) Is Montague the same of a saint, and, if so, will you please tell me about his life? (4) Does the promise of the Blessed Virgin that all who wear her scapular faithfully will be delivered from Purgatory the first Saturday after their death, apply to all scapulars, or only to the Brown Scapular?—JERSEY CITY, N. J.

(1) An article of devotion may be blessed with several indulgences. A rosary, for example, may be blessed with the Dominican, the Crozier and the Papal indulgences. A crucifix may be blessed with the indulgences of a happy death and the stations of the cross.

(2) The Canon Law (Canon 761) prescribes that pastors should see to it that a Christian name is given to all whom they baptize, but if they do not succeed, they shall add to the name given by the parents the name of some saint and enter both names in the baptismal record. Hence, the law implies that there may be cases of stubborn parents or sponsors who insist on imposing a non-Christian name on the baptized.

(3) Montague does not appear on any of our lists of saints.

(4) The promise referred to, called the Sabbatine Indulgence, applies only to the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. There has been much discussion over the authenticity and effect of this promise.

### The New Jerusalem

*The Apocalypse (21:2) says: "And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, as a bride adorned for her husband." Is this new Jerusalem some place apart from the heaven where the angels and saints now dwell, or is it one and the same place?—ST. JOHN'S, N. B.*

The Apocalypse is full of images and symbols which are difficult to interpret, but the meaning of this text appears to refer to the Church Triumphant, or the assembly of saints in glory. This assembly of glorified souls is likened to a bride, whose spouse is God. The symbol seems to refer to the inhabitants of heaven, rather than to heaven as a place.

### Jesus' "Brothers and Sisters"

*A well-meaning Protestant gentleman finds it difficult to receive the Catholic teaching concerning the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As proof for his assertion that she had other children besides Jesus he cites the text of St. Matthew (13:55, 56), which says, "Is not his mother called Mary and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Jude, and his sisters, are they not all with us?"—N. N.*

The relationship of the persons in the text to Our Lord is not to be understood strictly, that is that they were true brothers and sisters of Jesus and children of Mary the Blessed Virgin. The word "brother" and "brethren" had a very wide meaning in the Hebrew language. Thus, Abraham and Lot are called "brethren" (Gen. 13:8) and Lot is called "brother" of Abraham (Gen. 14:14), though their true relationship was uncle and nephew, because Lot was the son of Abraham's brother (Gen. 12:5). In Holy Scripture relatives are usually called brethren or brothers. In modern languages, as the Italian and Chinese, great latitude is given to these words. Even in English usage we have such expressions as "Dear Brethren" and "Brother workers," etc., which do not denote blood relationship.

Fortunately the evangelists St. Mark and St. Matthew tell us who was the mother of two of the "brethren" mentioned in the text. Speaking of the women who were present at the crucifixion, St. Mark says: "There were also women there . . . among them Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the Less and Joseph (another form of Joseph) and Salome, etc." (Mark 15:40). This Mary is certainly not the Blessed Virgin. She may have been the Blessed Virgin's "sister", who is mentioned by St. John (19:25): "There stood by the cross of Jesus, His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen." If "sister" is to be understood strictly and refers to Mary of Cleophas, James and Joseph (Joseph) were first cousins of Our Lord, not His true brothers.

If these "brethren" are not true brothers of Jesus, there is no reason to hold that Simon and Jude were true brothers. The "sisters" of whom no memory remains, cannot claim any closer relationship with Jesus. Besides there are too many included and implied under the term "brethren" of Jesus to justify the inference that they are all children of the same mother. The whole group simply designates relations, probably no closer than cousins, and it may mean simply close neighbors. It is ridiculous to imagine that there were brothers and sisters of Jesus who remained unknown, if those whom the people of Nazareth mentioned as "brethren" were no closer than cousins.

### Sister Mary Ethel, "Escaped Nun"

*I was angered to find the enclosed leaflet in one of our street cars. It is about Sister Mary Ethel, who is now lecturing as an "escaped nun." I would like to know the facts.—PITTSBURGH, PA.*

According to *Defamers of the Church* (Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Ind.), Sister Mary Ethel (baptized Helen Conroy) was a professed member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition at Mandalay

in Burma for a period of seven years (1910-1917), but was dismissed by the Superiors of the Congregation because of "disgraceful insubordination." Previously she had been dismissed from the novitiate of the Little Sisters of the Poor in England. She did not "escape" from the convent, but was permitted to leave by the front door, in secular garb, and accompanied on the first stage of her journey by one of the Sisters, and with a ticket for a trip half way around the world, to Canada, provided by the Bishop who relieved her of her religious vows. For her and her supporters, The Protestant Book House of Toledo, Ohio, to exploit her as an "escaped nun" is despicable.

### Plenary Indulgence for Daily Communicants

*I read in a Catholic paper that members of the Priests' Eucharistic League have the privilege of granting a plenary indulgence to those who receive Holy Communion daily. If this is true, why is not this almost unthinkable indulgence made known, so that those who receive daily may also share in this wonderful privilege?—ST. LOUIS, MO.*

On July 27, 1906, a few months after the publication of the famous Decree of Pope Pius X on Frequent and Daily Communion, an association of priests was formed in Rome. The purpose of this society, known as Priests' Communion League, was to promote frequent and even daily Communion. The Holy Father was so pleased with the object of the society that he enriched it with many privileges and indulgences, including the rare faculty of imparting a plenary indulgence once a week to all penitents who receive Holy Communion daily, or almost daily, that is five times a week. "By granting this precious favor the Church wishes to show her gratitude for the honor and joy which daily Communion affords Our Lord. Besides she wishes to form a choice band of pure souls, who are free not only from the guilt of sin but also from its temporal punishment, and who are ready at any time to enter Heaven without passing through Purgatory. Since this indulgence is received together with absolution, without any other work being required, the gaining of it may be considered more certain than the gaining of most indulgences." This faculty is granted to confessors who are members of the Priests' Communion League, not the Priests' Eucharistic League. The purpose of the announcement in the Catholic newspaper was, no doubt, to make this very remarkable faculty more widely known. The National Headquarters of the Priests' Communion League are located at 184 East 76th Street, New York, N. Y.

### Mystic Shriners

*Who are the Shriners who held a convention in Baltimore recently? May a Catholic join them?—MD.*

The full name of the Shriners is the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. The Order claims to have originated in Arabia. It was organized in the United States in 1876 by "Billy" Florence, an actor, and a few associates. They gave the order the dress and forms of the Arabian, because they appealed to their

love of the theatrical and colorful. The first meeting place was called "Mecca Temple," in conformity with these Arabian ideas. The Order is a secret one and closely affiliated with Freemasonry and devoted to its welfare. The Mystic Shrine is said to have been organized for fun and is called the "play-ground of Masons." Its principles are pleasure, hospitality and jollity. The exhibition of these principles are sometimes lacking in good sense and restraint. From what has been said, it is clear that the Order is forbidden to Catholics. (*Dictionary of Secret Societies*, Pruess).

### Obligation to Offer Mass

*It is assumed by some Catholics that it is optional for a priest to say Mass except on Sundays and Holydays. Others feel that it is expected of him that he offer Mass every day, when possible. Kindly enlighten me about this.—MASS.*

The obligation of a priest to offer Mass may arise from several titles; as the priesthood itself, his office (as pastor), because he accepts a stipend, or enjoys a benefice, or because of obedience or a promise made to another to offer Mass. The presumption is that the question refers to the obligation arising from the priesthood itself.

Canon 805 says that priests are bound to celebrate Mass *pluries per annum*—meaning "several times a year." This phrase is given a more definite interpretation in the same canon, when it says that bishops and religious superiors should see to it that priests subject to them offer Mass at least on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation. It is not a matter of law that priests must celebrate every day, but the laudable custom of celebrating every day, unless impeded for some reason, is generally observed.

### Diabolical Possession or Mental Disorders?

*It would appear that the demons mentioned in the Gospels are really nothing more than states of sin, physical abnormalities (dumbness), nervous disorders (epilepsy), or various mental disorders, such as schizophrenia (split personality). For instance, can Mark v: 1-20, and Luke VIII, 26-39, be understood to mean that "legion" refers to the existence of a split personality in the man liberated from the devil?—ROCHESTER, N. Y.*

Catholic doctrine teaches that demons are spiritual beings endowed with intellect and will. They are fallen angels, who were cast out of heaven and are now permitted to tempt men, and even to obsess and possess them. It is false, therefore, to interpret the accounts of diabolical possession narrated in the Gospels, as relating simply to neurotic and mental diseases under another name. In fact, St. Matthew clearly distinguishes between these things, when he says: "And they presented to Him (Jesus) all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils and lunatics, and those that had the palsy. And He cured them."

In St. Luke and St. Mark, the casting out of the

demons from the possessed man clearly proves that the demoniac was not suffering from disease, either mental or physical, but from the attacks of the demons. They perceived the presence and the power of Jesus and besought Him to send them into the swine. This is an act of intelligence, not only because the demons were thus saved from a greater humiliation, but also because it was a punishment for the Jews who unlawfully kept swine. The demons took possession of the swine who ran violently into the sea and drowned. A split personality could hardly take possession of pigs and drive them to destruction. Jesus treated the demons as intelligent beings, and hence they must be such. The Catholic interpretation is the only rational one. The reason why diabolical possession is so rare today is probably due to the spread of Christianity and especially the multiplied presence of the Holy Eucharist. But even today cases of diabolical possession occur in pagan lands, where Satan still has much power. (See "Possession" in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII.)

### Feminine Ornamentation

*My mother tells me that the use of powder and lipstick is sinful, but all the girls I know use them and I can't see why it is wrong for me.*—P.A.

Having recourse to the principle, "everybody's doing it," is not a very convincing argument for certain actions. If everybody started to jump from twenty-story windows, it would not justify you. However, the ornamentation of face and body is not unlawful, provided the following conditions are observed: it should be done in a decent manner and for a good end. St. Paul advised St. Timothy about this matter, saying, "In like manner women, also, in decent apparel, adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety, not with plaited hair or gold or pearls or costly attire" (I Tim. 2:9). The Apostle's particulars may seem severe, but he can be understood to mean that he disapproves such adornment in ordinary women's ordinary attire, not that they may not be used on special occasions, especially when a woman belongs to a class where such adornments are common and she has the means to provide them. Fashions change rapidly, as any family album will demonstrate. What may be ostentatious and even a little bold today may be accepted tomorrow. But the guiding principle of St. Paul—modesty and sobriety—must always be observed. What people of good morals approve of can generally be followed as a safe norm.

It is lawful and proper for women to present a good appearance before the world. This may require the covering of defects or the addition of a few touches from the beauty box. The intention to find a husband, and, having found one, to keep his affections, justify women in keeping themselves as pleasing as possible, with due regard, of course, to Christian modesty and decency. The same may be said when one is seeking work or some preferment. Nobody likes a dowdy female. But to adorn oneself in order to incite to sin is sinful. If one were to employ the arts of the beautician in order to show off or simply to win admiration, it would be a sin of vanity. Even better than beauty of face is beauty of soul and character, which remarkably transform even ordinary features.



Letters should as a rule be limited to about 300 words. The Editor reserves the right of cutting. Opinions expressed herein are the writer's and not necessarily those of the Editor. Intelligent comment concerning matters having relation to Catholic life and thought are welcomed. Communications should bear the name and address of writers.

### CONCERNING CATHOLIC EDUCATION

EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

I have just finished reading the article in the September issue of *THE SIGN*, entitled, "Catholic Education: Its Future." This is indeed a vital subject and is one which should have ample consideration at this time.

Realizing that Catholic Education is absolutely essential to a good life, many of our Catholic men and women have given up their lives to join religious orders where they have devoted their entire time to the teaching of Catholic students. These Catholic institutions have always been self-supporting, charging only a nominal fee of each student.

Catholics and Protestants alike pay taxes, a part of which goes for the support of public grammar and high schools. As for the Catholics who pay these obligatory taxes, the part that goes for the support of public schools is a complete loss to them, for their religion does not allow the children to attend a public school when it is at all possible to attend a Catholic school.

If all the students now attending Catholic schools were put on the State so that it would be responsible for the education of the Catholic students along with all the Protestant and few Catholic students already attending the public schools, it would be necessary for the State to spend a sizable amount of money to build new schools and supply books for the additional students. This would naturally raise the taxes which everyone knows are already high enough. It is only right and fair that each town should pay the tuition of students to attend either a Catholic high school or public high school. However, this is not true in a good many states. Taxes take care of sending the town students to a public school; why then do not these taxes take care of sending town students to a Catholic school?

I am a graduate of our Catholic high school in this city and know that the towns in Vermont do provide for the payment of tuition of students to either a Catholic school or a public school. The fee required at the public high school is approximately \$100 per student for each year. To attend the Catholic high school the fee is only about \$40 per year. The vast difference in price should make the towns glad to send students to Catholic high schools. The difference in fees is due to the fact that the Catholic high schools only require enough to provide maintenance of the school; they do



not "make" a cent on any student entering the school. Another point of interest is the fact that the scholastic rating of our Catholic high school, Mt. St. Joseph Academy, is far above that of the Rutland Public High School. This is indicated especially by the reports of business men who admit that graduates of the Catholic high school are far more advanced than the public high school graduates in business ability. The reason for this, as I have mentioned before, is that the religious teachers have only the interest of the student at heart. It is their life's work to give the student a Catholic education. The public high school teachers, while they may be some of the best teachers to be hired, have other interests besides teaching and therefore the students do not get the complete education that students of a Catholic school receive.

I sincerely hope that every state in the Union will follow Vermont's example in aiding students to attend Catholic schools.

RUTLAND, VERMONT.

BEVERLY M. WILSON.

### MONEY STILL A DIFFICULTY

EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

In the light of the writer's experience as a director of a small corporation during 1937 and 1938, I would like to comment briefly on Father Cronin's recent statements anent the influence of money on our present economic difficulties.

Father Cronin states: "The key problem with bank deposits is not the amount of money, but the velocity of its circulation . . . failure of money to circulate is a result largely of non-monetary conditions . . . it seems a bit far-fetched to feel that banks have a passion for suicide, and indulge it by provoking depressions."

It is true that the problem of deposits lies not with the volume but with the velocity—and by deposits I presume he refers specifically to demand deposits. But is not velocity the result of confidence, and confidence, in turn, the result of an ever-increasing supply of purchasing power, rather than the alternating increase and decrease of our present system, controlled as it is by a few financial leaders in the country today.

In 1937 my company was faced with the problem of securing needed additional working capital to tap the then increasing volume of business activity. We toyed with the idea of a bank loan, but due to certain warnings which began to manifest themselves in the summer of 1936—and I refer to the rise in reserve requirements imposed by the Federal Reserve—we hesitated for fear of future complications. In January 1937 came the announcement of an additional 50% increase in reserve requirements and as a result we dropped all consideration of additional debt burden, for it was apparent that a financial "squeeze play" was in the making. Everyone is familiar with business conditions which followed as a result. In the spring of 1938, the President and his advisors, faced with the practical effects of a financial policy of curtailment, permitted something like a billion dollars of sterilized gold to pass into circulation. Again the results were only too plain and many of my associates profited to the tune of thousands of dollars in the stock market alone, which, as you will recall, doubled in price level during the month of June alone. It was as easy as all that!

Finally, it is self-evident that banks have no passion for suicide, but in that respect, I recall the evidence recently presented to the Monopoly Investigating Committee concerning a bank executive who had received several substantial increases in his salary during depression years, but whose bank failed to pay one cent in dividends. I wonder if Father Cronin is aware of the amount of property confiscated by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company during the past five years? There is a cause and an effect to every action.

No, Father, I'm afraid I must agree with Lawrence Lucey's conception of the problem.

BUFFALO, N. Y.

J. E. F.

EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

Realizing that the role of listener is the safest in any debate, one is yet tempted to intrude when the subject is the Money Question. Perhaps Father Cronin and Mr. Lucey would clear up two points. Has the Church through any of its leaders ever called the Money Problem the "No. 1 Economic Problem"? Do the representatives of either "the Money Power" or "the Capitalist Order" in general regard money-reformers as their greatest adversaries?

Certainly Pope Pius XI built on Pope Leo XIII, and Leo listed the causes of society's ills thus:

1. The destruction of the workmen's guilds.
2. The repudiation of the ancient religion.
3. Rapacious usury.
4. Near-slavery of the property-less.

The first two are considered chief, even fundamental causes; the third is termed only an aggravating one.

If it be objected that Pius XI changed the order of things, the proof for said objection will be very welcome but will need to be very clear.

Or again, if it be objected that conditions peculiar to our own country modify Leo's diagnosis, then it would be necessary to show that the American Hierarchy, the leaders whom we must all follow, have pointed out the modification and indicated the special conditions here.

Finally, is it true that "the Money Power" has ever been more upset by any of the traditional American money-reformers than by labor organizers? More money and effort seem to have been spent in preventing men from enjoying their inborn right to organize than in opposing the activities of money-reformers.

A word on these points from both Father Cronin and Mr. Lucey would be gratefully received by another convert from money reform.

MT. VERNON, N. Y.

T. J. D.

### MORALITY OF "REBECCA"

EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

I am sure you recognize that I cannot, in justice to myself, do otherwise than return to your columns after Mrs. Burton's rather extended and carping reference to me in her article on *Rebecca* in your September issue.

When I recovered from a certain surprised bewilderment, I gathered that, because I considered her "Bad Ethics" interpretation of *Rebecca* far-fetched, she suggested that I must consider the Fifth Commandment also far-fetched. Such a suggestion, besides being en-

tirely gratuitous, is irreverent and irrelevant. It seems to imply that I think the Fifth Commandment does not apply to the murder in this book. *C'est pour rire*. I fail to see how my actual, limited argument required a dissertation on the Fifth Commandment and on the requirements for the Divine forgiveness of sin. As a matter of fact, the understanding and forgiveness which I mentioned (with certain connecting sentences which were omitted in the printing of my letter) referred to the understanding and forgiveness which Mrs. Burton, in her May article, suggested Maxim should have accorded his wife—but such forgiveness, be it noted, would have been without “repentance, confession and payment” on Rebecca’s part.

The very obvious fact is that Mrs. Burton seems unwilling to recognize the only argument of my August letter, viz.—that the story, *as it is told*, does not support the views upon which she bases her interpretation of bad ethics, such views being: (1) that Maxim did not feel regret; (2) that he did not suffer punishment. But she does deal very derisively with an idea of punishment which she evokes by paraphrasing my mention of the gloomy atmosphere of the tale. Certainly a judge does not pronounce any such sentence, as he deals with material things mostly; but may I suggest to Mrs. Burton (though I really feel that in this I am carrying coals to Newcastle) that the intangible suffering of the spirit which the Divine Judge ordains probably tends more to induce true repentance than any material affliction. But if she does not consider the fearful ordeal of the inquest proceedings and the loss of Manderley as punishments, then what does she consider them to be; and both of these things must have lessened, to some extent, Maxim’s “opulence,” another punishment.

But, *noblesse oblige*. Mrs. Burton’s enthusiasm for her subject led her to wander away a bit from the straight and narrow path of relevant argument, but, as Bulwer Lytton says, “enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity.”

MONTREAL, CANADA.

MARY CHRISTY.

## EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

It is an unfortunate freak of human nature that we too infrequently rush to pen and print about things that we like, and too eagerly do so about things we do not like. Perhaps that is why so many of us “*Rebecca*-rooters” have not expressed our admiration for the story which some people who write for and to THE SIGN have become so catty about.

I come of a rather large group of book readers, all of whom are Catholics. (And I do mean Catholics.) We are enthusiastic about *Rebecca*. Personally, I am a poor man, and am able to purchase only those books I believe to be of exceptional merit. I purchased *Rebecca*.

*Rebecca* is a pretty good example of what the Greeks meant by tragedy, is it not—a good man meeting catastrophe brought on by his single weakness? With Macbeth the weakness was ambition; with Othello, jealousy; with Maxim, exasperation at a libidinous wife. Maxim is a tragic figure throughout the book, and the catastrophe he finally meets is more painful by far than death.

But why should writers for and to THE SIGN be discussing *Rebecca* at all, at all? Let’s have an end to it!

It would be better for the Catholic writers of literary criticism and the rest of us if, rather than making capricious comments on an established school of writers, they got behind unknown Catholic authors of competence, and brought them challengingly to our attention. Now wouldn’t it?

LYNN, MASS.

NICHOLAS WELLS.

## WASHINGTON RESIDENTS

## EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

THE SIGN for August, page 7, in the article “Taxes Do Strange Things,” says: “About half the residents of Washington, D. C. are employed by the Federal Government.”

On June 30, 1936 the Civil Service Commission gave the number of Federal employees in Washington, D. C. as 117,100. The population of Washington, D. C., is 650,000 (?).

WASHINGTON, D. C.

OSCAR L. JOHNSON.

## DRAWINGS OF MARIO BARBERIS

## EDITOR OF THE SIGN:

This is just to express a word of appreciation for the many fine features in THE SIGN every month, but particularly in this month’s issue—September.

The beautiful drawing depicting the Crowning of Thorns by Mario Barberis is to my mind extremely touching and inspiring and surpasses any picture of a similar type that I have seen in a magazine. It is well suited to framing and in a black and silver frame makes a lovely picture. A suggestion to readers who may not have done so already—a frame of that size is very easily obtained and I know the results will be well worth the small investment necessary.

LYNN, MASS.

EILEEN J. DALE.

## THANKSGIVINGS TO ST. JUDE

A.E.M., Elizabeth, N. J.; E.O.C., Bath, Maine; M.G.W.C., Cincinnati, Ohio; M.C.B., Freeport, L.I.; L.A.H., E. Braintree, Mass.; H.Y., Belmont, Mass.; M.T.D., Hawley, Pa.; M.B., Worcester, Mass.; A.V.P., Rye, N.Y.; C.T.W., Narberth, Pa.

## GENERAL THANKSGIVINGS

Blessed Virgin Mary, M.C.L., Washington, D.C.; Sacred Heart of Jesus, C.T.W., Narberth, Pa.; Sacred Heart, M.J.L.E., E. Cleveland, Ohio; St. Anthony, M.T.T., Hartford, Conn.; Souls in Purgatory, M.M.P., Long Island, N.Y.; St. Joseph, M.A.F., Richmond, Va.; Sacred Heart, F.P.R., Boston, Mass.; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, J.H., New York, N.Y.; St. Anthony, R.M.K., Los Angeles, Calif.; St. Francis, E.A.R., Troy, N.Y.; Souls in Purgatory, M.R.A.C., Pittsburgh, Pa.; St. Martha, M.E.W., New York, N.Y.; St. Anthony, M.J.P., Waterloo, Iowa; Sacred Heart of Jesus, M.J.M., Dorchester, Mass.; St. Anthony, H.B.M., Brooklyn, N.Y.; A.M., Belleville, N.J.; E.O.C., Bath, Maine; J.A.B., Dorchester, Mass.; M.D.C., Jersey City, N.J.; M.L.B., Gloucester, N.J.; A.B., Clarksville, Tenn.; P.F.B., Medford, Mass.; M.C., Elmsford, N.Y.; M.V.K., Sayville, N.Y.; M.H., New York, N.Y.; M.J.S.R., Elizabeth, N.J.; M.W., St. Louis, Mo.; K.D., St. Louis, Mo.; C.W., Milwaukee, Wis.; M.C.P.B., Scranton, Pa.; M.C., New York, N. Y.; C.A.T., Dubuque, Iowa.

# CATEGORICA •

THE WORLD IN WHICH WE  
LIVE AS SEEN THROUGH  
THE EYES OF OTHERS

## Have You Been to the Arctic?

• MANY OF US need our ideas of distant lands corrected. Viljalmur Stefansson in "Talks" gives an example:

Most people think of the Arctic as a bleak and God-forsaken place, a silent, frozen frontier. As a matter of fact, the Arctic lands that skirt the polar seas are neither silent, nor barren, nor lifeless, nor cold, nor dismal.

The Arctic is far from silent. In summer the air is filled with a hum and song of billions of insects and millions of birds. In winter, when the ice is being piled up against the polar coast, there is a high-pitched screeching as one cake of ice slides over the other, and great crashes and roars when cakes as big as church walls, after being tilted on edge, topple over with terrific force.

The North is far from silent—and far from being perpetually cold. Oh, it's cold. But there are places right here in the United States where it is colder during the winter than it is on the Canadian fringe of the Arctic Sea during the arctic winter! And it can be as hot as blazes in the Arctic during the summer. I remember one summer in the Arctic some years ago when, for six solid weeks, the temperature reached 90 degrees in the shade nearly every day. That was almost a heat wave. And the worst of it was that, in addition to heat, we suffered terribly from insects, especially mosquitoes. Those who haven't been in the Arctic have no idea what mosquitoes can be like.

## An American Girl Speaks

• SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD HILDA SCOTT, in the "American Magazine" does a good job in telling what she owes her country and what the country owes her. Of democracy she writes:

Being a democracy, America's problems are directly the people's. If the people shy away, they are letting democracy down. They are indeed letting themselves down!

America, for better or worse, credits its citizenry with enough intelligence and enough gumption to manage their own government, or—the same thing—themselves. That's why the question, "What good would my vote do? I'm just one in a million," is not only stupid, but—in a world where political horizons are shifting overnight—downright reckless. Does not the apathetic questioner know that millions, as well as tens and hundreds, are counted by ones? Does he not know that the price of his vote is no more than the energy it takes to get to the polls where (this being America) he can scratch at will, without feeling a jab at his back? Does he not

know that the privilege of the vote is the privilege of managing one's self? How can he expect to hang on to the privilege of self-government unless he uses it?

## Welcome News for Book Lovers

• SOMEONE MAY YET DISCOVER a formula to retrieve borrowed umbrellas. Meanwhile it is encouraging to learn from "Advertising and Selling" that a system for tracing borrowed books is available:

Literary kleptomania is doomed. William Morrow & Co. has produced "The Book Detective," planned by Beach Cooke, admonished by Christopher Morley. Each step in tracking down unwisely loaned books is explained, with forms for classifying borrowers and recording loans, stand-in fillers for bookshelf gaps, suggestive bookmarks to accompany the wayward tome, and a selection of potent form letters to needle the overdue bibliophile. It may keep your library well stocked, but we bet you'll do more and more of your reading in solitude. You can't get scientific about book-reclaiming without busting a few friendships. Take your pick: Anthony Adverse or your old college roommate.

## Irish Longevity

• WE TAKE the following story of Irish longevity from the "Irish Digest":

There is something, I think, in the Irish soil or the Irish climate that makes for longevity. We have more centenarians to the square mile than any country on earth. In olden times—before the days of tea, white bread, canned food, and speed fiends—they must have been far more numerous.

Take the famous Countess of Desmond (whose portrait in oils I was looking at only the other day in the house of a grand-daughter of Denis Florence MacCarthy). There was a woman for you. Bacon refers to her in his *Natural History* and declares that she grew her third set of teeth at the age of 120! Sir Walter Raleigh, during his visit to Ireland, met her and wrote about her remarkable age "which all the noblemen and gentlemen in Munster can witness."

The most detailed story of the old Countess, however, was related by the Earl of Leicester, who declared that she was married in the reign of Edward IV, lived on until late in the reign of King James I, and died "at some years above 140." Shortly before her death she made a journey from Ireland to London, to beg some relief at Court, "being very poor through the ruin of her Irish estate."



Fynes Moryson, that much-travelled man, was shipwrecked on the Clare coast near the place where the Countess lived and has a good deal to say about her. He corroborates the story about her teeth and says that up to the time of her death she used to walk five miles to the nearest market-town every week. As for the manner of her death, it was not, we are told, due to anything so prosaic as senile decay.

"She must needs," says the old chronicler, "climb a nut-tree to gather nuts; so, falling down, she hurt her thigh, which brought a fever, and that brought death." Let that be a lesson to all high-spirited moderns of 140 who go a-climbing nut-trees!

## Vigilance the Price of Liberty

• QUOTED BY "VITAL SPEECHES" is Major General J. G. Harbord's comparison of democratic and totalitarian states. In his final passage he emphasizes the responsibility of individuals:

In the existing world situation every citizen should remember that liberty for the individual did not just "come to pass." It has been won, step by step—and dearly won—through the centuries. It can be lost—and dearly lost—in a fraction of the time taken to build it. It can slip away through unnoticed infringements upon the individual's rights—step by step.

If great numbers of our citizens cease to believe deeply in individual liberty, tolerance, self-respect and self-reliance; if great numbers of them cease to thrill with thankfulness for the inestimable freedom they enjoy, we may lose these priceless privileges—even as citizens of other nations have.

None of us expects that calamity to overtake America. But every one of us owes it to his countrymen and to the cause of liberty everywhere to do everything in his power—by his serious thinking, his daily actions and his vote—constantly to reaffirm our American heritage of individual and national freedom.

## Iniquity of Lawyers

• THE INIQUITY of lawyers has long been an object of public condemnation. Some interesting items are found in an article "The Lawyers and the Laity," by Vincent Grogan in "Bonaventura":

The patron of the profession, St. Ives of Brittany, who, though a lawyer himself, managed to become a saint—"he must have been a poor lawyer"—was looked upon as such a phenomenon that one of the local wits coined the tag about him—

Advocatus sed non latro

Res miranda populo—

which Lord Macmillan translates, "An advocate, but not a thief—a thing well nigh beyond belief." Indeed, some went so far as to suggest that the *advocatus diaboli* must have been nodding throughout the process for the canonization of this holy man, who was known as "the advocate of the poor."

That this popular prejudice against the profession has not disappeared is apparent from the press, the radio and the music hall. Some months ago an English news-

paper announced as "almost unbelievable, yet vouched for by several readers and checked in the telephone book, that there is a firm of solicitors in Sligo named Argue and Phibbs." Unwilling admiration, mingled with breathless astonishment, that at least two members of the profession had come out in the open, and announced upon their brass plate the ruling canons of their profession!

At the hands of the music-hall artist, the profession suffers indignities of a kind from which even barbers and dentists—well known to be a most rascally type—are immune. At the moment, platforms and boulevards echo the story of the negro witness who was being cross-examined by an American lawyer. The colored man, with touching naïveté, prefaced every answer with a drawling "Ah think—." "Talk out straight, man!" shouted the exasperated lawyer, "I don't want to know what you think." The negro shook his head apologetically. "Ah'm sorry, sah," he replied, "Ah ain't no lawyer—Ah can't talk without thinkin'."

## Foreign Relations

• SOME PLAIN facts on international relations are stated by Charles A. Beard in "Giddy Minds and Foreign Quarrels" in the "Atlantic":

Mr. Lippmann says that America is to be "what Rome was to the ancient world." That sounds big, but the test of facts bursts the bubble. Rome conquered, ruled and robbed other peoples from the frontier in Scotland to the sands of Arabia, from the Rhine to the Sahara, and then crumbled to ruins. Does anybody in his right mind really believe that the United States can or ought to play that role in the future, or anything akin to it?

America is to be "what Great Britain has been to the modern world." Well, what has Great Britain been to the modern world? Many fine and good things, no doubt. But in terms of foreign policy, Britain swept the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, and the Germans from the surface of the seven seas. During the past three hundred years Britain has waged numerous wars on the Continent to maintain, among other things, the balance of power. Britain has wrested colonies from the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, and the Germans; has conquered, ruled, and dictated to a large part of the globe. Does anyone really believe that the United States can or ought to do all these things, or anything akin to them?

Mr. Lippmann's new brew of Roman grandeur and British philanthropy is of the same vat now used by British propagandists in appealing to Americans who have a frontier "mentality." These propagandists have at last learned that, between the submarine and airplane on the one side and events in Russia, Germany and Italy on the other, the jig is up for British imperial dictatorship in the old style. So they welcome the rise of the United States as a sea power to help maintain "security and order," that is, the British Empire. With this, for obvious reasons, French propagandists agree. But Americans who are bent on making a civilization in the United States and defending it here will beware of all such Greeks bearing gifts and set about their own work on this continent.

## Impressions of Poland

• **WALTER DURANTY**, writing in the *"Atlantic,"* recalls his impressions of Poland on the eve of the outbreak of hostilities. One of the incidents related is the following:

"No, I don't agree with Remarque," said my friend the Polish reporter, and drummed his knuckles on the café table. "I'm sorry they've burned his books, but I don't really think he was right."

I'd been speaking of the passage in *All Quiet on the Western Front* when the French and German soldier in the shell hole agreed that men of the people were everywhere much the same and would all be friends if once they could win themselves free from the slogans their masters had taught them.

"Remarque may have thought that was true, but it is not true about Poland. The Germans are not our friends. No Germans are our friends. Perhaps once, but not any longer—we know our friends and foes. Our enemy is Germany, which wants to steal Danzig from us and the Corridor, although both have really belonged to Poland since . . ."

"Oh, yes," I nodded wearily. "They were yours five hundred years ago and so you must fight for them now."

"That is just what I mean. In 1526 the frontiers of Poland were . . ."

"Why always bring in history? Americans never think . . ."

"Of course, you can't understand. But did you ever reflect that United States' history began when Poland's history ended? Almost year for year, when you began we ended, and Poland had no history. There was no Poland at all while your history was being written. Don't you see what that means to us? Shall I say that Poland was dead—and came to life again? Can't you see that its life must resume from the point where it had stopped? Can't you see what Danzig means and why we must either fight or let Poland sink back to the grave?"

## The Chinese Are Different

• **WE DIFFER** from the Chinese in more ways than one. From an article by Carl Crow in *"Current History"*:

Many European and American housewives strive for the ideal of a spotless house. With all their scrubbing and polishing, they never quite succeed, for there is always a bit of dust loitering in this corner or that, to say nothing of millions of disease germs which a microscope would discover in the most spotless kitchen. Chinese housewives never attempt this impossible ideal. In every household, even the meanest and most obviously filthy, the battle against dirt actually goes on, but never with the idea that it can be vanquished completely. In this, as in other things, the Chinese reach a comfortable compromise and a house that is reasonably clean is deemed to have met all requirements anyone should ask. If dirt and rubbish are swept under the table, it is at least out of the way and will not be seen except by those who are impolitely curious.

## Inhuman Humanists

• **LIBERAL**, humanitarian Leftists are mercilessly dissected by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn in *"The Examiner"*:

A human race differentiated from the animals only in degree, not in kind, is a "fraternity" of beings related to the baboons and rattlesnakes. Man is a mere product of nature, whose title to existence is determined by his fellow creatures according to how well he fits in with their schemes. In the eyes of the absolute materialist, it makes no difference whether you kill a disagreeable insect or a "superfluous" human being. Humanitarianism collapses, easily and logically, into inhumanity. The humanitarian Leftist, recognizing no superior law, acts from sheer practicality: he is a pacifist; he dislikes physical and mental pain; as an anti-Christian, he sees no value in suffering; and he therefore sympathizes with mercy-killers, abortionists, and the Soviet headmen. He sees in material progress—in some future state overflowing with hospitals, with psychoanalysts on all street corners, with free love, free euthanasia, and free everything to offset the effects of the greed—the only guarantee of a happier generation for tomorrow.

## To Matt Talbot

• **THE STEADILY INCREASING INTEREST** in a Dublin laborer is furthered by Liam Brophy's tribute in *"The Father Matthew Record"*:

Rough-hewn, his cross from things of common days  
He made, and bore it with brave sanctity  
Through sordid streets and slums, while inwardly  
His feet trod heaven's stair: amid the maze  
Of myriad-minded years his shone; o'er haze,  
Hell-hovering, his soul hung stainless, free;  
Heard not the world's hoarse cry; the minstrelsy  
Of heaven's music lulled him with angel-lays.  
They shall not say God's Light from out our ways  
Wanes and grows dim, for 'tis such as he,  
Torchbearers of His Truth, triumphantly  
That bear it onward with tumultuous praise,  
Hid in the heart; from age to age its fire  
Hath flashed before the feet of swift desire.

## The Popes and the Passionists

• **VISITORS TO ROME** will be interested in the following reference to the Church of Sts. John and Paul, which is in charge of the Passionist Fathers and adjoins their Generalate. Taken from *"The Catholic Fireside"*:

When Cardinal Pacelli "took possession" of his Titular Church in 1930, the Father General of the Passionists in his address of welcome, alluded to the large number of Cardinals Titular of SS. John and Paul who had been raised to the Chair of Peter. It is a surprising fact, that there are no less than 91 Popes who as Cardinals, were Titulars of this church. The church itself was restored and beautified in 1158 by Adrian IV, who was Nicholas Breakspear, the only English Pope.



# BOOKS



## Australia, Her Heritage, Her Future

By PAUL MCGUIRE

The easy flowing style of Mr. McGuire makes this history of Australia an enchanting thing. His book is not merely a history nor a travelogue, it is rather an entertaining, informative discussion of the discovery, settlement and development of little known Australia. One misses gratefully the dry, factual presentation commonly expected of books of this kind. By interspersing homely anecdotes, native legends and keen personal comment Mr. McGuire has produced a book which is at the same time charming and instructive, historical and entertaining.

The author is a native Australian and has a great love for the land of his birth. His love, however, is not the love that sees only the sunshine and is blind to the shadows. Rather it is a love great enough to recognize and acknowledge faults and imperfections and keen enough to suggest remedies.

Every phase of life is touched upon in this book. The author has visited every section of his country and his analyses of the social, economic, religious and industrial aspects of Australian life come, not from hearsay, but from personal contact and scholarly research. His criticisms of conditions in his native land arise not from a destructive spirit but rather from a constructive. If at times he sounds foreboding in his prophecies, as he does when speaking of the birthrate in Australia, it is because he knows of the many dangers facing a country with an alarming decrease in its birthrate.

This book is heartily recommended to the readers of THE SIGN. The subject of the book is one about which most Americans are woefully ignorant. We confidently prophesy several pleasant, interesting hours to anyone who takes up this book.

Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York. \$3.50.

## The Delusson Family

By JACQUES DUCHARME

*The Delusson Family* is not an entertaining aberration of fantastic fiction. It is not drug-store literature. It features too persistently the human sanities and the supersanities of a lively faith.

Jacques Ducharme in *The Delusson Family* furnishes us with a quasi-historical novel implying the migrations of the French-Canadian from the charming simplicities of farm life in the province of Quebec to the strange and fevered activities of industrial life in the melting pots of Western and Central Massachusetts. The Delusson family settles in Holeyoke, and here we witness the tears, the joys, the economic growths of their home vitalized by a vivid, aspiring faith. In this beautifully novelized home life every incident and department of its living is reflected and related to a real and benign Christ.

Perhaps the bad literary feature of this novel is its lack of variety and pace. There are some advisings too with regard to critical situations in the lives of members of the family which are jejune and amateurish. But *The Delusson Family* deserves a large reading public. It is an effort to portray the beauties of a living Christ as the Head of the Christian family. *The Delusson Family* provides a novel which offers this vital bit of wisdom.

Funk & Wagnalls Co., N. Y. \$2.50.

## St. John Chrysostom

By DONALD ATTWATER

St. John Chrysostom was one of the most illustrious Greek Fathers of the fourth century. He was particularly distinguished for his pulpit eloquence. His surname of Chrysostom is a Greek word meaning "golden mouth." Mr. Attwater calls him "the voice of gold." St. John tried the monastic life for a few years but

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gave it up and received ordination to the sacred priesthood. Antioch was the first scene of his priestly labors, which consisted principally of preaching. His sermons, which were popular in character, attracted large crowds, so large that St. John had to warn his hearers against pickpockets. From Antioch he went to Constantinople as bishop. In this most important see of the East he continued his frequent preaching, but his success stirred up the jealousy of his ecclesiastical enemies. His attacks on the corrupt life of the imperial court also drew upon him the wrath of the Empress Eudoxia. These two forces managed to drive him into exile, where he died in 407.

Mr. Attwater has written a very interesting life of the saint, based mainly upon his many sermons and other writings. Out of this mass of literature, the author brings the saint very much to life and presents him to the attention of English readers. Though St. John is remembered chiefly for his eloquence, it was not the character of his preaching that made him a saint. It was his holy life and Christian fortitude in the face of opposition, even to the last, that merited for him the title of saint.

Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee. \$2.00.

## Orestes A. Brownson

By ARTHUR W. SCHLESINGER, JR.

Born in Puritan New England, Orestes A. Brownson was from his earliest years imbued with sturdy Puritan ideals. Theology as manipulated and interpreted by rival religious groups was the common basis of thought and action in the New England of his childhood if not indeed of his adolescence. Brownson was a controversialist from his birth. At the age of nine he defended free will against the theology of Jonathan Edwards in stout argument with two elders. At the age of twelve he sol-



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**GOD IN AN IRISH KITCHEN** (\$2.50) is one of our favorite titles, and exactly right for Father Leo Ward of Notre Dame's book on the west of Ireland. He never sees what he has been told to expect; but what is actually there he sees and records with the accuracy of a camera—a camera in the hands of an artist. Whether you know Ireland or not, you will be enchanted.

Maurice Zundel is as great a spiritual writer as we have yet discovered. In **THE SPLENDOR OF THE LITURGY** (\$3.00) he examines every word and action of the Mass—even its silences—showing everything in the light of eternity. No one, after reading this book, will be able to take the Mass casually again.

Sometimes even a publisher comes on buried treasure. Fray Diego de Estella's **MEDITATIONS ON THE LOVE OF GOD** (\$1.25) definitely comes under that heading. St. Francis de Sales knew and loved his writings, so perhaps did Fray Diego's uncle, St. Francis Xavier; but until Julia Pember made this translation, it had never appeared in English.

**A LIFE OF OUR LORD FOR CHILDREN** (\$1.25) by Marigold Hunt is simply the Gospel story, written so that a child can understand it and begin to know Our Lord and realize what it means to belong to the Kingdom of God on earth. It is for approximately the eight to twelve age group.



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emly decided to submit himself to Methodism whose preachers conjured up hell fire with horrifying urgency.

Brownson seems to have had but little formal education. Gifted with a keen and active mind, he was interested in all great public questions of his time. He was never at rest. A turbulent, rollicking controversialist, he was happy only when waging war on some group or system of thought. He espoused almost every side of every question. He began as a Calvinist, next became a Methodist, took up Universalism, Unitarianism, and was finally received into the Catholic Church. He plunged into bitter debate on slavery, immigration, finance and other issues. As a journalist he was no respecter of men or institutions. Catholicism was the only issue that, once having embraced, he never abandoned. Yet within the fold of the Church he still had battles to fight. The pity is that he had no training in Scholastic Philosophy. Had his great talents been directed and controlled by the vigorous discipline of the philosophy of the Schoolmen, he would have proven a mighty force for the Church in America.

Students of controversy will find much of interest in this well-written biography of Orestes A. Brownson. *Little, Brown & Co., N. Y. \$2.50.*

### Art From the Mayans To Disney

By JEAN CHARLOT

Jean Charlot is something of an upsetter of traditions on writing as he is on art. A Frenchman has no business to be able to handle the English language with such mastery. He betrays his nationality in some turns of phrase, but the life and force of his style remain extraordinary.

The book begins, in due order, with Mayan art which the author describes as "one of the few fully ripe racial expressions the world has known," and goes on to his beloved Mexicans, tracing their development from the earliest art discovered in Mexico all the way to Orozco and Rivera. Modern Mexican art, as he shows, has its roots far back in Mexico's past. He writes also of forgotten Mexican print-makers and makes amusing excursions into all manner of subjects from Indian dances to Edward Weston's photography and Surrealism. It is hard to think of any-

thing more likely to enrage the Surrealists than to be praised, as he praises them, for bringing back storytelling into art "though the stories they tell are not at all nice." But perhaps the best things in the book are the essay on pre-movie attempts to show movement in art, and the essay on Disney. The prehistoric artist who drew a boar with four legs to show it was running would have "hugged with reverence this other animalist Disney," says Charlot.

This is a book to make one proud of American art and possibly a little ashamed of not having known more about it.

*Sheed & Ward, N. Y. \$2.00.*

### Country Lawyer

THE STORY OF MY FATHER  
By BELLAMY PARTRIDGE

*Country Lawyer* is the story of a man who began his legal career in a small town in upstate New York. For half a century and more he continued to practice law successfully in the same town of Phelps. In the routine work of drawing up and settling wills, mortgages, leases, partnerships, of fighting lawsuits and taking an occasional turn at politics (to say nothing of raising a large family) he came into intimate contact with the lives of his neighbors.

Consequently the book is far from being simply a legal file on the loose. Rather the author, son and subsequent partner of *Country Lawyer*, takes authentic cases and makes them points of departure for humorous and tragic, but always interesting portrayals of human nature.

The familiar atmosphere of the courtroom is recaptured in the famous case of Phineas Dodd, usurious town miser, who sued Rev. Duncan McLeod for organizing a very efficacious prayer for rain; in the tense days during which Jerry Billings stood on trial before a maddened citizenry who prejudged him guilty of incendiarism; in the humorous moments when the charming Mrs. Weldon took advantage of being on trial to place herself on display.

All in all the book presents an interesting and authentic scene. We agree with the author that though the theatre of action is a single small town, yet the story has nothing of the regional about it—it could be duplicated in any of the 5000 small towns dotting the American landscape.

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In a few instances we wish the author had been a bit more circumspect, so we could recommend it for general reading. As it stands, it's a good story told by a good story teller for adult readers.

Whitlessy House, New York. \$2.75.

## Heroes of the Cross

By MARION A. HABIG, O.F.M.

Too little known are the magnificent achievements of the Franciscan missionaries in North America. Most of us are acquainted with merely a few names which shed lustre on the annals of our country and of that Religious Order. Few, all too few, have an appreciation of what these intrepid religious contributed to the formation of the New World. This small volume now offered to the public is a summary of data compiled during the past ten years. Later the author hopes to present fuller detail in a greater work.

The author claims that while, "other Religious Orders have likewise labored valiantly in various sections of the same area . . . if we consider the pioneers in the field, the extent and duration of the missions, the number of the personnel, the Franciscans undoubtedly hold the foremost position in the missionary annals of North America." Perhaps it may be a surprise to some to learn that in Spanish America the glorious record of the sons of St. Francis is much superior to that of the sons of St. Ignatius. The protomartyrs of North and South America, the first martyrs of Mexico, the United States and Canada were all Franciscans. Indeed this publication is long overdue and is a worthwhile contribution to American Church History.

Fortuny's, New York, \$2.00.

## Chesterton: As Seen By His Contemporaries

By CYRIL CLEMENS

This contribution to the growing mass of Chestertonian material is of the frankly appreciative variety, approaching its subject in the proper spirit of reverence. As the sub-title indicates, it is a compilation of what other people have said about the mighty G.K.C. Mr. Clemens devotes only one chapter to his own personal recollections.

Individually, many of the quotations are valuable tributes to a great

and lovable character. Collectively, however, they degenerate into a cataloguing of who said what about Mr. Chesterton. The fault lies, we should say, with Cyril Clemens' unwillingness or inability to provide a satisfactory continuity for his book. It lies too with his obvious determination to record favorable comment almost exclusively. Chesterton himself would be the last to claim perfection.

Needless to say, the best portions of the book are those taken from G.K. himself, which, we suppose, merely clinches the author's case. While this cannot be accepted as first-rate biography, speakers will find the index of names a quick guide to opinions and anecdotes. It proves, moreover, that the spirit of literary hero-worship still flourishes.

International Mark Twain Society, Webster Grove, Mo. \$2.50.

## Religions of Unbelief

By ANDRE BREMOND, S.J.

This small volume admirably succeeds in attaining the purpose of its author—to examine and discuss the attitude of modern rationalism towards religion. Expressly avoiding the controversial the author clearly and succinctly demonstrates the utter inability of rationalism to satisfy the intellectual and moral needs of mankind.

Beginning by showing, contrary to the contention of modern rationalists, that the ancient philosophies of Greece and Rome demanded a super-rational hypothesis, the author then demonstrates how unsatisfactory are the theories advanced by the moderns to supersede traditional religion. Spinoza, Bertrand Russell and H. G. Wells are treated in a sympathetic and objective manner and their inability to satisfy the needs of man is conclusively manifested. Passing then to the positive side he shows that traditional religion, the religion of the God of Abraham—a transcendent, personal and provident God, completely satisfies all man's needs. The chapters "God and History," "Religion, Personal Salvation and History" are, indeed, worthy of special commendation.

While the author's style is, indeed, clear and his language exact, this book demands close attention and is by no means light reading. The author has confined himself to the

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short space of 160 pages in treating of this vast subject so that the greatest economy of words must be expected. One might wish that there was a greater development of the different phases, but at least one will find in this brief study a guide for further personal study.

This book can be well recommended and makes a worthy companion to its splendid predecessors in the Science and Culture Series.

Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. \$1.75.

## A Life of Our Lord for Children

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There is a great need today for interesting, well-written Catholic books for children. Miss Hunt has contrived to present for juvenile audiences a vivid account of the story of Christ's life on earth. This is a book that should be in every Catholic home, and in the libraries of all Catholic schools. Of particular interest is the opening chapter, wherein the author has presented in simple, everyday language an intelligible story of what happened before Bethlehem. Why was there need of a Redeemer? What is the real meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven? Well-chosen parts from the Old Testament, a brief history of the Jewish people, combine to give a proper perspective on the coming of the Messiah. Events preceding the Nativity are too often neglected by those writing books about Our Lord's life on earth. Miss Hunt has been wise to include them.

The incidents in the life of Christ are presented accurately, and with due regard for chronological sequence. The present volume is one of the best on the market and will make an admirable gift for any boy or girl.

Sheed & Ward, New York. \$1.25.

## SHORTER NOTES

### CHRIST'S TWELVE

By REV. F. J. MUELLER

These brief sketches on the Apostles appeared originally in *THE SIGN*. Now in book form, (second edition), they will do much to make the first Bishops of the Church better known to the faithful. Father Mueller has brought to his work a

keen understanding of human nature, plus a thorough scholarship, and through his efforts these great men of another day live once more. He has included separate chapters on Peter, Andrew, James the Greater, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew and Judas, with a section on "The Brethren of the Lord," by which title James the Less, Simon and Jude are generally known. There is also a revealing chapter on St. Paul, "A Man's Man."

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Dr. Spielier brings forth eighty-one situations wherein virtue may not be all it seems, thus giving opportunity for considerable introspection on the part of the reader. Each chapter analyzes some unattractive human trait, pointing out how little is to be gained by continuous self-deceit.

This little work will be of value to parents and educators. Previous to the present translation, it ran into numerous editions in German.

Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. \$1.00.

#### STENCELED OF GOD

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This is a book primarily intended for college men. It is meant to be a guide for Catholic collegians to preserve them as Catholics in an age when some secular colleges are notoriously anti-religious. The subject-matter is wide in scope and embraces almost the entire field of Catholic teaching with reference to college life.

The author attacks the subject

with his usual directness and perspicuity, plus the experience born of years of teaching, which is sure to make an appeal to college readers.

*Stenciled of God* is an ideal volume for the desk of every Catholic college student. It is not a spiritual-reading book but a spiritual book about spiritual things.

The Magnificat Press, Manchester, N. H. \$2.00.

#### MATRIMONIAL IMPEDIMENTS AND DISPENSATIONS

By JOSEPH A. QUIGLEY, J.C.D.

Doctor Quigley, experienced seminary professor and member of the matrimonial curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, has finally printed his excellent manuscript elucidating the matrimonial law of impediments and dispensations. Within a mere six pages he has summarized just what the active priest wants at his fingertips within a moment's notice. In a clear typographical set-up, there is listed the impediments, their extent, their dis-

pensability, who is empowered to dispense. This chart, as it may be called, also indicates whether in danger of death or in an urgent case the Local Ordinary, the pastor, the priest who assists at marriage under exceptional circumstances, the confessor can dispense the impediment. The canonical reasons for granting a dispensation are listed in Latin and succinctly explained in English. A sample petition for application to Rome or the Apostolic Delegation, in cases of dispensation, is supplied with practical comment. The parochial clergy will be pleased with the possession of this brochure. Advanced seminarians will find it most helpful in clarifying the legislation of the Code as regards marriage.

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# ARCHCONFRATERNITY

## of the Sacred Passion of Jesus Christ

**"AND** when morning was come, all the chief priests and ancients of the people held a council against Jesus to put Him to death." (Matt. XXVII, 1.)

It was the saddest morning in the life of Jesus. There was no cheery greeting from His friends, but only the evil faces and harsh words of His enemies—only the grim vision of a terrifying Cross. And saddest of all was the fact that His enemies were unanimous—"all"—in condemning Him to death, while His professed friends were scattered in cowardly solitude or were denying Him before the indifferent or curious world.

Since then He has seen many similar mornings. His enemies have always met with one accord, determined to deny His claims, to rob Him of the fruits of His Passion, while His chosen friends have been idle, indifferent or cowardly. They have not paused in the morning to greet Him with a profession of loyalty, a word of gratitude for His sufferings, or a promise to follow Him. They have neglected to assist at the Sacrifice of our Ransom, even when opportunity offered. If more Catholics did this, they would be more eager to champion His cause, to assert His claims, to fight for His rights. The whole world would know that they also "had been with Jesus of Nazareth," that they are not timid, far-off followers, but close, sympathetic watchers by His Cross. Through the Mass, by grateful memories of His sufferings, the courage of Christ will be infused into their souls. The same Jesus Who by a look changed Peter from an arrant coward into a weeping penitent, and then into a fearless apostle and an heroic martyr, will, by virtue of His Passion, inspire with valor and fortitude those who assist at the renewal of His Sacrifice worthily and assiduously.

*Make us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to assist worthily and assiduously at these sacred mysteries; for as often as this Saving Victim is offered up, so often is Our Redeemer's work made to avail in our behalf. Through Our Lord. (Mass—ninth Sunday after Pentecost.)*

FATHER RAYMUND, C.P., DIRECTOR,  
ST. MICHAEL'S MONASTERY UNION CITY, N. J.

## GEMMA'S LEAGUE OF PRAYER

**BLESSED** Gemma Galgani, the White Passion Flower of Lucca, Italy, is the patron of this League.

Its purpose is to pray for the conversion of the millions of pagan souls in the Passionist Missions in Hunan, China, and to obtain spiritual comfort and strength for our devoted missionaries. One should have the general intention of offering these prayers for the spread of Christ's Kingdom in China.

All requests for leaflets, and all correspondence relating to Gemma's League should be addressed to Gemma's League, in care of THE SIGN, Union City, New Jersey.

SPIRITUAL TREASURY	
For the Month of September, 1939	
Masses Said .....	80
Masses Heard .....	12,226
Holy Communions .....	6,652
Visits to B. Sacrament .....	11,468
Spiritual Communions .....	21,511
Benediction Services .....	3,033
Sacrifices, Sufferings .....	15,072
Stations of the Cross .....	3,063
Visits to the Crucifix .....	4,719
Beads of the Five Wounds .....	2,513
Offerings of PP. Blood .....	29,172
Visits to Our Lady .....	6,167
Rosaries .....	14,313
Beads of the Seven Dolors .....	3,109
Ejaculatory Prayers .....	614,201
Hours of Study, Reading .....	17,322
Hours of Labor .....	31,566
Acts of Kindness, Charity .....	37,242
Acts of Zeal .....	35,493
Prayers, Devotions .....	122,433
Hours of Silence .....	7,780
Various Works .....	35,084
Holy Hours .....	30

## Restrain Not Grace From the Dead

(Eccles. 7:37)

Kindly remember in your prayers and good works the following recently deceased relatives and friends of our subscribers:

Rt. Rev. Msgr. T. J. O'Brien  
Rev. John F. Mulligan  
Rev. Joseph F. X. Cloutier  
Rev. James Woods, C.S.B.R.  
Rev. John F. Naab  
Bro. Joseph G. Bittroff, S.M.  
Bro. Denis Burns, C.F.X.  
Sr. Maria Brigitta  
Sr. Mary Paul  
Sr. Frances Carmel  
Margaret McDonald  
William T. Dunn  
Daniel Joseph MacDougall  
Mary Dooley  
James McLaughlin  
Sarah Blasch  
Neil Kelly  
Catherine Leonard  
Hugh Quinn  
James McStay  
David L. Bergamini  
John McGuinness  
Catherine Smith  
Dr. J. J. Maley, D.D.S.  
Bridget A. Gavin  
Sarah Sheehan  
Thomas F. Lancer  
Edward M. Dooley, M.D.  
James B. Keany  
Katharine Theresa Coughlin  
John McGuire  
Daniel J. Townsend  
John Hawkins  
Josephine L. Smith  
Katherine Goodwin  
John Wolf  
Andrew Turner  
Anna Walsh  
Mrs. McGloin  
Mary Ford  
Patrick Gibbons  
Elizabeth Foertsch  
Lydia A. Neeson  
Frank O'Connor  
Raymond Janus  
Andrew Nielsen, Sr.  
Andrew Nielsen, Jr.  
John P. Doyle  
Bella Liptrott  
Joseph L. Driscoll  
Mrs. R. Cadmus  
John G. Keane  
James J. Warren  
Mrs. R. S. Lombard  
Annie Jackson  
Fred W. Jackson  
Julia Sexton  
Helen Power  
Catherine Atwood  
Lester A. Howard  
J. M. Cunningham  
Margaret Flood  
James T. Brady  
J. Ambrose Durkan  
Francis H. Durkan  
Thomas J. Kelly  
Theodore J. Deuschler  
John F. Dower  
Mary A. Eaves  
Andrew J. Grentzer  
Katherine W. Bourne  
Frances M. Arnold  
August H. Borr  
Mrs. G. Woods  
Mary Llewellyn Elliot  
Anne Ward  
Hubert A. Moran  
Nellie Murray  
Anna Oleske  
Margaret C. Madden  
Patrick H. Madden  
Elizabeth Dougherty  
Anna Hamilton  
Louise C. Mara  
Margaret Murray  
Lucy Ann Chapestle  
Martha A. Hickey  
Edward Sitko  
Mrs. E. Perten  
Mrs. D. J. O'Hara  
David Landusky  
Thomas F. Manning  
Joseph Cornelius  
Ann Coughlin  
Anna Tessitore  
Charles Mathes  
William Dalton  
John Milton Padgett  
Thomas McGrady  
Mrs. James Chambers  
Alexander J. Kuciej  
William J. Egan  
Bernard P. Derks  
Joseph Madden  
George Brown

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.  
—Amen.

# AMONG THOSE REMEMBERED

SOMEONE has well said that it is a poor Will which does not name Our Lord Jesus Christ among its beneficiaries.

Whatever you have you owe to Almighty God. It is fitting that gratitude prompt you to provide assistance for one or more of those institutions which are promoting His Kingdom upon earth.

Long after you have departed from this world your charity and generosity will be making possible magnificent achievements for His Cause. Your name will be held in prayerful memory by the zealous and needy missionaries whom you have helped.

Let Our Divine Lord be among those specially remembered when the hour comes for you to leave all that you possess.

\* \* \*

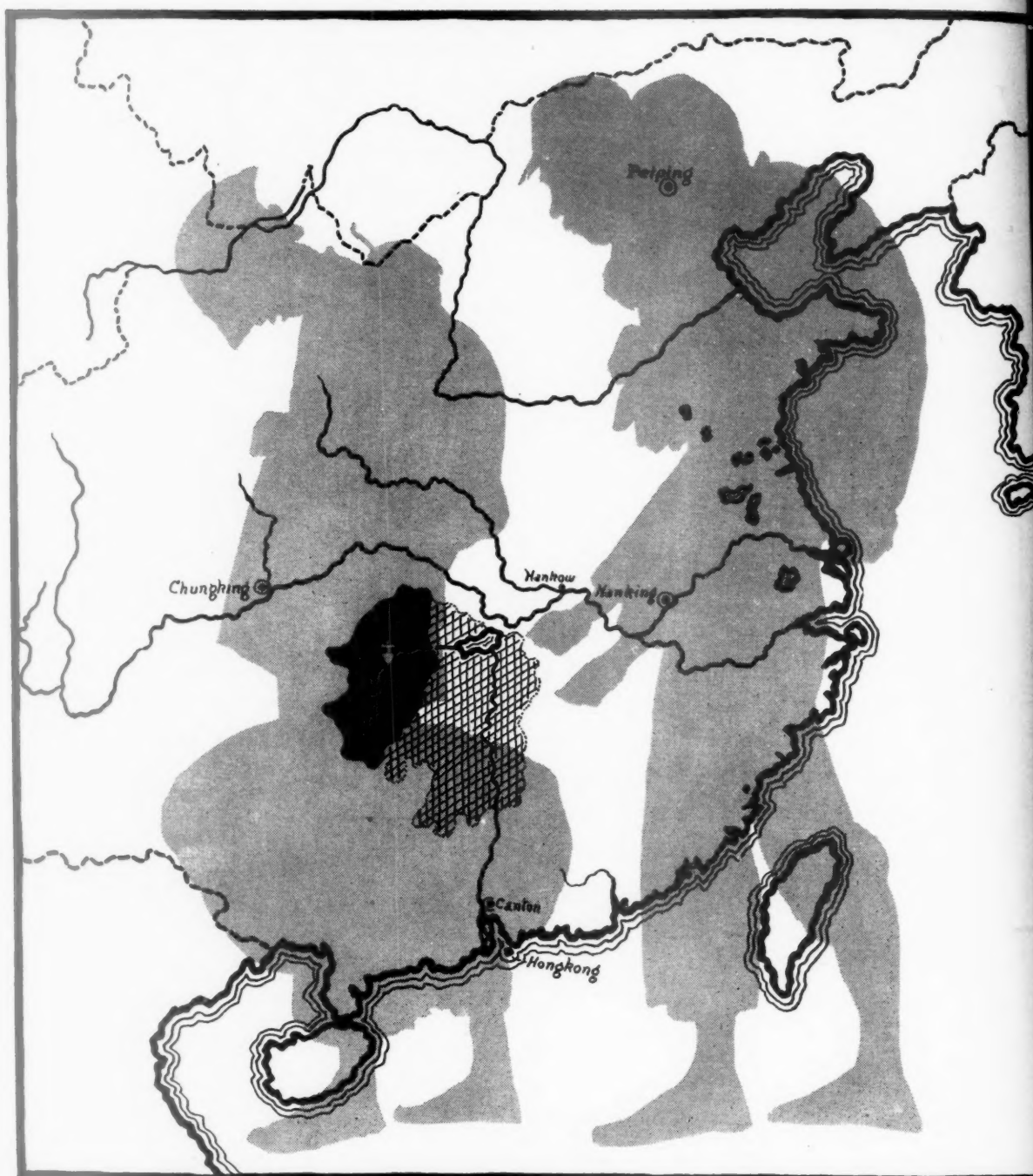
May we, for His honor and glory and for the support of those who are laboring in fields afar, suggest that this definite provision be embodied in your last Will:

*I hereby give and bequeath to Passionist Missions, Inc., a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New Jersey, the sum of.....(\$ ) Dollars, and I further direct that any and all taxes that may be levied upon this bequest be fully paid out of the residue of my estate.*

PASSIONIST MISSIONS, INC.

UNION CITY, N. J.





## SHADOW OVER CHINA

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*Please send an offering to:*

**THE SIGN**

**THE HUNAN RELIEF FUND**

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